

DALLAS COWBOYS

# STAR

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## SEAN LEE

COWBOYS LINEBACKER CORPS  
IS BUILT TO BE VERSATILE

CHANGE IN SEASON  
MOVING FORWARD WITHOUT TONY ROMO

PREVIEW  
FALCONS AT COWBOYS

Volume 41, No. 14



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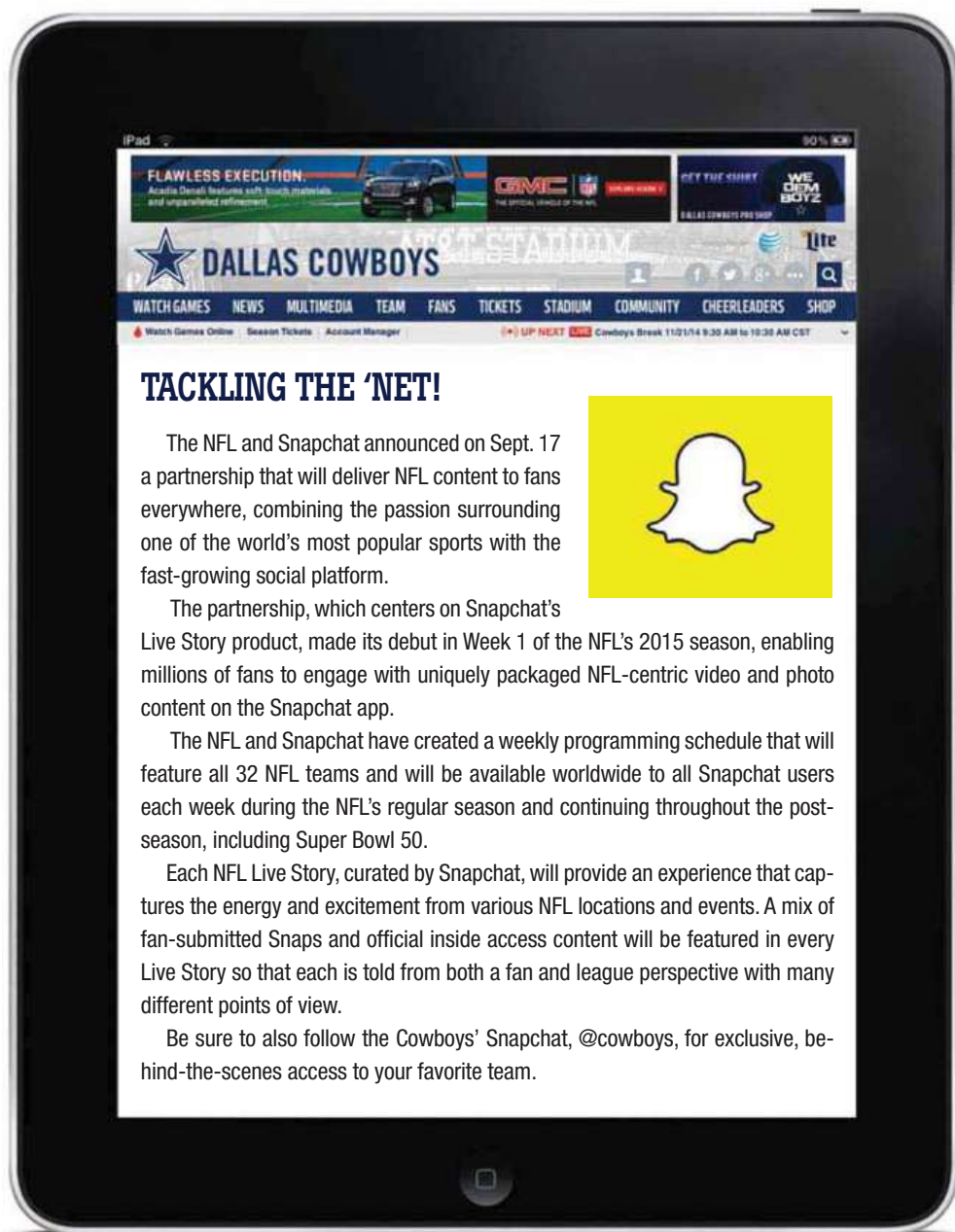
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## TACKLING THE 'NET!

The NFL and Snapchat announced on Sept. 17 a partnership that will deliver NFL content to fans everywhere, combining the passion surrounding one of the world's most popular sports with the fast-growing social platform.



The partnership, which centers on Snapchat's Live Story product, made its debut in Week 1 of the NFL's 2015 season, enabling millions of fans to engage with uniquely packaged NFL-centric video and photo content on the Snapchat app.

The NFL and Snapchat have created a weekly programming schedule that will feature all 32 NFL teams and will be available worldwide to all Snapchat users each week during the NFL's regular season and continuing throughout the post-season, including Super Bowl 50.

Each NFL Live Story, curated by Snapchat, will provide an experience that captures the energy and excitement from various NFL locations and events. A mix of fan-submitted Snaps and official inside access content will be featured in every Live Story so that each is told from both a fan and league perspective with many different points of view.

Be sure to also follow the Cowboys' Snapchat, @cowboys, for exclusive, behind-the-scenes access to your favorite team.

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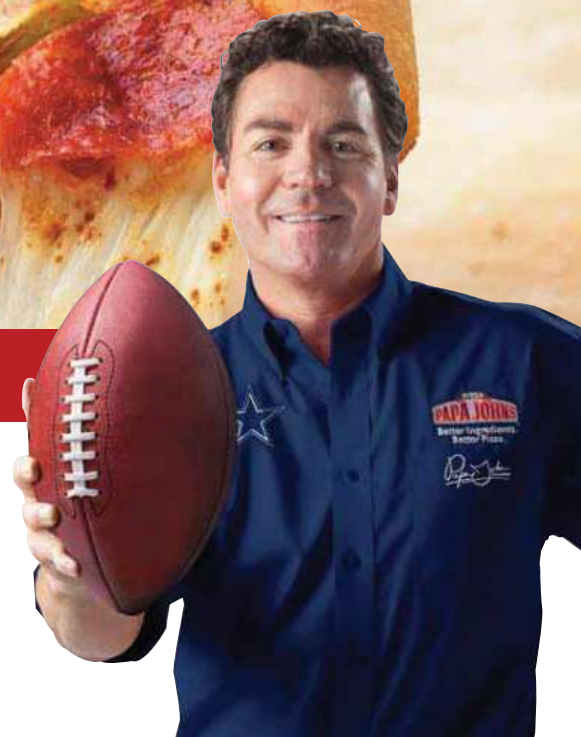




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## Earning His Wings

Cornerback Byron Jones may be a first-round draft pick, but that doesn't always mean much, especially to his hungry teammates. On each and every road trip throughout the season, he and his fellow rookies are charged with stopping on the way to the airport to pick up a little food (or likely a lot of food) for the veterans to enjoy during the flight, in this case the team's trip last weekend to Philadelphia. Welcome to the NFL, kid.

— James Smith/Dallas Cowboys





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*Jerry Jones*

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*Weekdays @ 9:30am & 12:30pm*

*Mondays @ 5:15pm*

*Mike Florio*

*Fridays @ 8:30am*





# JOSH ELLIS

## HOME, SWEAT HOME



I think I can explain the Cowboys' relative lack of home-field advantage.

That's a real thing, by the way. You're liable to notice this week that there are far more Atlanta Falcons fans in the crowd than you would want. And you've probably taken note that the Cowboys supporters aren't always as loud as you would hope when the defense needs help on a big third-down play.

In fact, heading into Sunday, the Cowboys are just 27-22 at AT&T Stadium since it opened in 2009. And that's not terrible considering that the team has piled a 6-10 season and three straight 8-8 campaigns into the building since then.

But it's not dominant, either. They were only 4-4 there in the regular season last year, but went undefeated on the road. In the 2015 home opener, they beat the Giants by the skin of their teeth on opening night after being seemingly rattled by the stage and environment for the first 58 minutes of the game.

Meanwhile, the likes of Green Bay and Seattle – hopefully the Cowboys' real rivals this year – hardly ever lose on their home fields.

But like I said, I can explain it (or at the very least, attempt to tie it to something I noticed in my own life recently): The place is so nice, they don't want to mess anything up! It's like when you move into a new house and can hardly relax because you're constantly rubbing smudges off the counter, trying to keep it pristine forever.

Recently, my place of work moved from a dingy old building in the middle of nowhere – the Texas Stadium of offices, I think – to new swanky, modern digs in a haute neighborhood – the AT&T Stadium of offices, in relative terms. After working in a dark, musty old office, we're suddenly bathing in natural light, goosing the engines of our stand-up desks, devouring all the free Greek yogurt in the kitchen and, ultimately, not getting a whole lot of work done. The new building is like a theme park to us, and we're frankly side-tracked with exploring all the bells and whistles.



Now, it's been six full seasons since the Cowboys moved into AT&T Stadium, so it's not like they're mesmerized by the fancy surroundings anymore. And when the ball snaps, I'm quite sure they're focused on the man in front of them, and not the drummers in the end zone plaza.

But I wonder if the bright lights and the big stage do contribute to some lethargy, or are distracting from time to time. I wonder if it makes them tight to know that some 90,000 people are peering down on them every week, and they'd better not make a mistake – just like it makes me nervous to know that the new office building has cameras watching us, and so I'd better not waste too much time on Facebook.

For the visiting team, perhaps the us-against-90,000 feel only brings out the best. But for the Cowboys, maybe the air of expectation in this giant building only adds pressure.



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# OUT OF BOUNDS

## WITH NICK HAYDEN

Defensive Tackle | 29 years old | 8th NFL season | Wisconsin

by Ram Luthra

### FAVORITE HALLOWEEN COSTUME?

I went as a unicorn one time in college.  
I was the life of the party then.



### SOMETHING PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU:

I have three dogs.

### WHAT IS THE LAST BOOK YOU READ?

(After a laughing ...) *Tales from the Crypt*

### FAVORITE RESTAURANT IN D/FW?

Hmmm, Hard Eight BBQ. Who doesn't love barbecue? Everything they have there is delicious.

### DO YOU PLAY AN INSTRUMENT?

No, but I wish I played the guitar.



### Favorite emoji

The frog



### FAVORITE DISNEY MOVIE:

*Toy Story*. I know, I know, it's Pixar, but I'm going to go with that.

### katy perry or taylor swift?

Katy Perry



**BATMAN OR SUPERMAN?**

I'm going to go Batman.



### In-N-Out or Whataburger?

In-N-Out

### PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT OF YOUR LIFE:

My little girl, Layla. She is two and a half years old.

### FAVORITE PREGAME MEAL:

Honestly, it's whatever they give us. Steak, chicken, whatever is out there.

### FUNNIEST GUY IN THE LOCKER ROOM:

Jeremy Mincey — definitely.

### LEBRON, KOBE OR MJ?

Definitely Jordan. All day.

### WHAT PIECE OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE A 15-YEAR-OLD FOOTBALL PLAYER?

Keep working hard. Don't let anyone tell you no. Just keep being yourself and don't let anyone put a ceiling on you. Just try to get better each day.



If you have questions that you would like answered from players, please submit them via email to [editor@dallascowboys.net](mailto:editor@dallascowboys.net).





## JAIME CARDONA



**HOMETOWN:** Monterrey, Mexico

**WHEN I BECAME A COWBOYS FAN:** 1982

**FAVORITE CURRENT COWBOY:** Dez Bryant

**MOST-UNDERRATED COWBOY:** Danny White

**LAST COWBOYS GAME I ATTENDED:** Colts at Cowboys, Dec. 21, 2014, when we clinched the NFC East title.

**FAVORITE COWBOYS WIN:** Colts at Cowboys, Dec. 21, 2014.

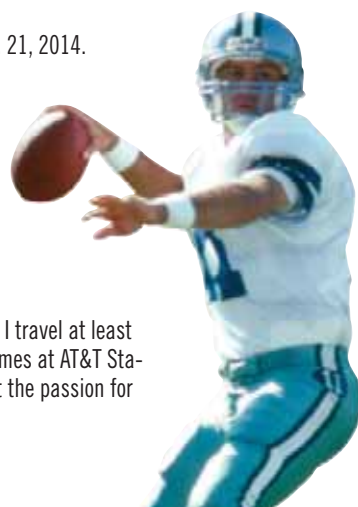
**MY GAME-DAY RITUAL:** I always wear my jersey and cap.

**MOST-PRIZED COWBOYS POSSESSION:** An autographed picture of Mel Renfro.

**FAVORITE PLAYER TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER:** @DezBryant

**WHAT MAKES ME THE BIGGEST COWBOYS FAN:** I travel at least twice a year from Monterrey, Mexico, to enjoy live games at AT&T Stadium, to meet new friends and to enjoy to the fullest the passion for the Dallas Cowboys.

**COWBOYS ARE:** My great football team!



Dallas Cowboys United members may submit Fan Profile answers and photos (jpeg, 300 dpi) for consideration to [editor@dallascowboys.net](mailto:editor@dallascowboys.net) or mail to *Dallas Cowboys Publications*, Attn: Editor, Fan Profile, 1 Cowboys Pkwy, Irving, TX 75063-4924. Photos cannot be returned. Dallas Cowboys Star Magazine reserves the right to edit answers.



## HIDDEN TREASURE

Buried down in the archives of the Cowboys' rich history lies a bounty of unique, and oftentimes strange, memorabilia.

Back when iconic head coach Tom Landry was manning the sideline, fans might have noticed the card he regularly held in his hand during games, which had all of the plays in the Cowboys' arsenal. This particular one is from the team's matchup against Atlanta on Oct. 27, 1985, a game Dallas won, 24-10. Everything from short-yardage situations to third-and-long to what to run when inside the opponents' 10- to 14-yard line are here, including "deceptive" plays and the Cowboys' two-minute drill. Long before the days of coordinators, Landry would call all of the plays himself, for both offense and defense, using this two-sided card as a reference.

### Flint's View



CARDONA: COURTESY OF JAIME CARDONA; WHITE: DALLAS COWBOYS ARCHIVES; LANDRY: AP PHOTO/PAUL SPINELLI



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# ON THE SIDELINES with Kristi Scales

## COMPARING CAP HITS



When DeMarco Murray left the Cowboys to sign a contract with the Philadelphia Eagles, the deal had huge implications for both teams' respective salary caps.

Yes, Murray scored big-time with the \$21 million in guaranteed

money from the Eagles, but what about salary cap hits? In the bottom-line business of the NFL, salary cap is where the rubber meets the road. How much does a team allocate not only to a specific player, but to an entire position group such as running back?

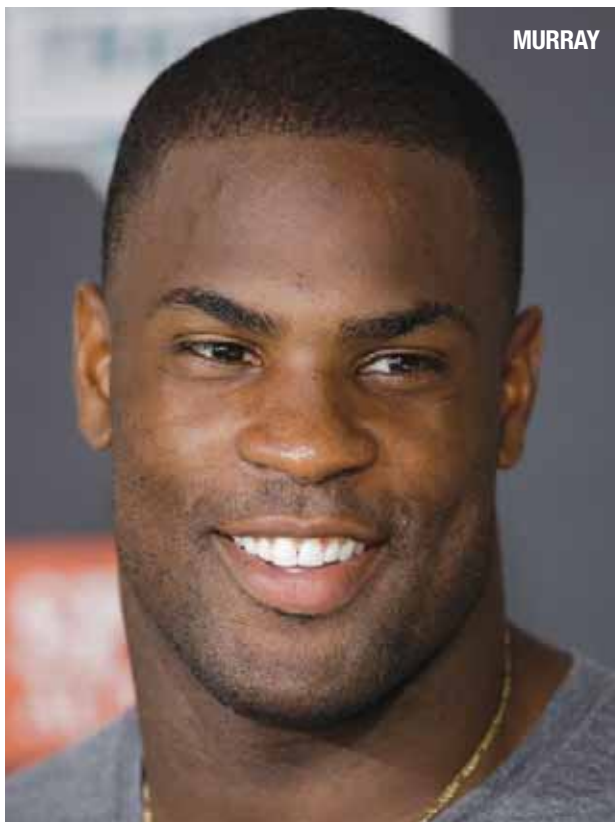
Here's an interesting fact about the 2015 season: The Eagles are paying Murray more than the Cowboys are paying their entire running back corps. According to Spotrac.com, Murray's base salary of \$5 million (3.3 percent of Philadelphia's entire 2015 cap) is more than the combined cap hits of the Dallas running backs (\$4.035 million total for Joseph Randle, Darren McFadden, Lance Dunbar and Christine Michael). The four Cowboys running backs accounted for 2.72 percent of cap space as of Week 1 of the regular season.

Heck, we can even add fullback Tyler Clutts' salary and the amount for all four running backs, plus the fullback (\$4.62 million combined for five players) is still less than Murray's cap hit.

But wait, there's more. The Eagles also pay big money to backup running backs. Darren Sproles' cap hit is \$4.1 million (2.56 percent of their cap). Ryan Mathews counts \$2 million (1.25 percent) and Kenjon Barner another \$510,000.

Overall, the Eagles have allocated \$11.6 million to their top four running backs entering the season, a total of 7.26 percent of their cap. Among all NFL teams, it's the third-highest percentage in positional group spending for running backs behind the Vikings (with Adrian Peterson's \$15.4 million cap hit) and Bears (including Matt Forte's \$9.2 million cap hit).

If Murray carries the Eagles to the NFC East title, it will be money well spent by Philly, and Cowboys fans will lament the decision to not match the rival's financial investment in the running back.



MURRAY

By not re-signing Murray, though, the Cowboys decided to allocate their resources to other positions. Which is not an easy pill to swallow for fans of Murray who are disappointed he didn't remain in Dallas. If there is any solace in losing a popular and tremendously productive player, it's that the team was able to spread the wealth, so to speak, among other position groups.

Once again this year, cornerbacks receive the highest percentage of Cowboys' salary cap space (\$21.5 million, 14.5 percent). That's the fourth-highest percentage of cap space devoted to the position among all 32 NFL teams.

The second-highest percentage of Cowboys' cap space is allocated to the offensive line (\$16.5 million, 11.1 percent). That's a higher percentage than the guys on offense who throw (quarterbacks 10.5 percent) and catch (wide receivers 7 percent) the ball.

The Cowboys have been burned in recent years by giving big contracts to stars after breakout campaigns. All you had to do was look at the Eagles sideline for a sobering reminder.

And no, I'm not talking about Murray. His guaranteed money and big bonus is from the Eagles. I'm talking about the other former Cowboy, wide receiver Miles Austin, who signed a one-year deal with Philly for \$2.3 million.

Dallas still bears the brunt of the 6-year \$54 million contract extension given to Austin in 2010. He counts \$5.1 million against this year's Cowboys salary cap (3.44 percent). That's more than Pro Bowl players Tyron Smith, Travis Frederick and Zack Martin. It's the seventh-highest amount on the entire team. And it's more than twice the amount that he counts against the Eagles' 2015 cap. Ironically, this season Austin counts more against the Cowboys' cap than Murray counts against the Eagles' cap.



AUSTIN

Ouch, that's a lot of dead money. Those are serious numbers. And a reminder of the risk involved in long-term contracts ... as well as a reminder of why I majored in liberal arts instead of math. Numbers are not always fun, especially when you're talking about other people's money.

Do you have a question about the Cowboys or life on an NFL sideline? If so, email Kristi at [KScales@DallasCowboys.net](mailto:KScales@DallasCowboys.net) or write to: Kristi Scales, Dallas Cowboys Radio Network, One Cowboys Parkway, Irving, TX 75063





With so much to cover in so little time, *On Air with Dallas Cowboys Star Magazine* hosts Josh Ellis, Shannon Gross and David Helman can't address all the great Twitter questions they get from fans each week. So they rounded up the best fan feedback and responded to a few of them here.



**Marcial Guajardo**  
@marcialguajardo  
@josh\_ellis11 @Shannon\_PG @HelmanDC  
Who will step up in Dez's absence?

**DAVID:** It needs to be Terrance Williams. Pretty simple.

**SHANNON:** No one on this team, or maybe in this league for that matter, can fill Dez's shoes. I do expect to see Jason Witten and Cole Beasley get more looks, but as far as an outside receiver, yeah, this is Williams' time to step up and be the man.

**JOSH:** And he should be ready by now – or as ready as he's going to be – as a third-year receiver. It takes a little while for guys to get up to speed at that position in the NFL, but he should be prepared by this point.

**SHANNON:** He has shown flashes in the past, but he'll need to show up on every down in every game to help ease the blow of losing Dez.

**DAVID:** He's your best deep threat and the closest thing you have to a No. 1 receiver while Dez is gone. Another guy I'm watching is Gavin Escobar, who has proven himself to be a red-zone mismatch who can go up and snag touchdowns. I'm looking for him to get some more looks as a vertical threat.



WILLIAMS

**SHANNON:** Wow, this is a great question.

I want to go with a running back here, but as we were just saying, with the recent loss of Dez, I'm going to go with a wide receiver. Calvin Johnson? He's a big physical guy that, like Dez, can go up and get the ball.

**DAVID:** Shannon's answer of Calvin Johnson is a good one, but for the purposes of this, I'm going to assume Dez will be back playing after

**David darmoni**  
@Dabaroni406  
@josh\_ellis11 @HelmanDC @Shannon\_PG  
If you were going to add once player from any division to bolster SB chance who'd it be?  
#NOQBS

six weeks, so an extra All-Pro wide receiver seems like overkill. Go ahead and give me J.J. Watt.

**JOSH:** Yeah, I'm with you. Megatrons and Dezeption would be impossible to stop, but Watt is the best player in the league. He's the right answer.

**DAVID:** Any time you can add an MVP-caliber pass rusher to a unit that already includes Tyrone Crawford and DeMarcus Lawrence, you've got to do it. Imagine that defensive line when Greg Hardy returns from suspension. Watt would take this defense to another level.

**JOSH:** Wishful thinking, unfortunately.

**JOSH:** It's a great question. An important question.

**DAVID:** Full disclosure: I have never actually seen a Cowboys lineman eat chili, but I have to go with Travis Frederick. Look at that guy. You think a guy with a beard like that doesn't know how to put down some chili? Please. He'd put everyone else to shame.

**JOSH:** I could see that. Although chili is more of a southern thing. Ronald Leary, maybe? La'el Collins?

**SHANNON:** Since you didn't specify offense or defense, I'm going to go with Big Al, our maintenance man at Valley Ranch. The man can put away some chili.

**Or Moyal**  
@OrMoyal  
@josh\_ellis11 @HelmanDC @Shannon\_PG  
Which lineman eats the most chili? I'll log off and listen.

*"On Air with Dallas Cowboys Star Magazine" can now be heard live or on demand each week at DallasCowboys.com. Tweet your questions to @DCStarMagazine, @josh\_ellis11, @Shannon\_PG and @HelmanDC*



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# RECEIVER

Wideouts like the Cowboys' Dez Bryant and the Falcons' Julio Jones have helped bring about a golden era in the NFL.

**By Micah Powell**

Football is a sport of change.

Players retire, teams relocate and success fluctuates. It's the nature of the business.

Even the game itself isn't immune to revision. A sport once controlled by the run, football is now dictated by the pass and dominated by wideouts. Led by the likes of Dez Bryant and Julio Jones, the receiver revolution has ushered in a brand of football never before seen in the history of the game.

Bryant and Jones, whose teams square off in Week 3 at AT&T Stadium, are at the forefront of this shift. These physical freaks with track-star speed and dunk contest-like hops are the leaders of a golden era for the receiver position, a spot in the offense that has blossomed from humble beginnings to now becoming the league's focal point.

Even Jerry Rice saw the change coming in the 1990s when a small-school standout named Terrell Owens joined the San Francisco 49ers.

"I had been around big receivers before," Rice told *The Boston Globe*, "but I had never been around big receivers that were like an animal on the field and were that fast. It's the evolution of the game."



# EVOLUTION

That evolution has seen the skill set that made Owens such a rare breed now seem almost commonplace with the likes of Bryant, Jones, Calvin Johnson, Demaryius Thomas, Jordy Nelson, Andre Johnson and Larry Fitzgerald. Teams don't hope to find a receiver who can routinely win jump balls with their strength and athleticism, they require them.

It is not only the physically imposing pass catchers who are making their mark. Players such as Randall Cobb, Wes Welker, Julian Edelman and the Cowboys' Cole Beasley, undersized but extremely quick players who routinely work the short routes over the middle of the field, are doing so as well. Combine the overwhelming deep threats with these efficient chain movers and you have an unstoppable combination.

With these incredibly evolved pass catchers populating the league, quarterbacks have taken to the air in staggering numbers. In the opening week of 2015, teams averaged 232.2 passing yards and 22.6 points per game, numbers once unthinkable in the era of ground-and-pound football.

Jones played a large role in that offensive output in the season opener, as the Falcons' superstar torched the Eagles for nine catches, 141 yards and two touchdowns in a 26-24 victory.

Byron Maxwell, the Eagles cornerback tasked with covering Jones throughout the night, is no slouch either. A physical defender, Super Bowl champion and former member of Seattle's vaunted secondary, Maxwell was in awe of the Atlanta wide receiver, saying, "He's big. He's strong. He's fast."

Comparing eras is hard, but it's doubtful that there has been





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**HUTSON**

guard of sorts thanks to the rise of the pass, as teams have migrated in mass from the plodding, run-first slugfests of the early game to the all-out aerial attacks of the present. With it, too, the game's best athletes have also abandoned their usual positions. No longer are the top physical specimens automatically slotted in behind the quarterback, set to tote the rock 30 times a game. Now they are split out wide and unleashed in a furious sprint down the sideline.

Since the pass made its way from the college ranks to the professional game, every era has had its dominant outside forces. Don Hutson and Raymond Berry were flat-out unstoppable in the 1930s and 1950s, respectively, times when the power run was in style and few teams used the pass as a weapon. The accomplishments by the pair are even more impressive considering they came in 10-, 11- and 12-game seasons. In fact, Hutson's 17 touchdowns in 11 games in 1942 would have put him on pace for 24.7 scores in a modern 16-game season, a mark that would have bettered Randy Moss' NFL record of 23 set in 2007.

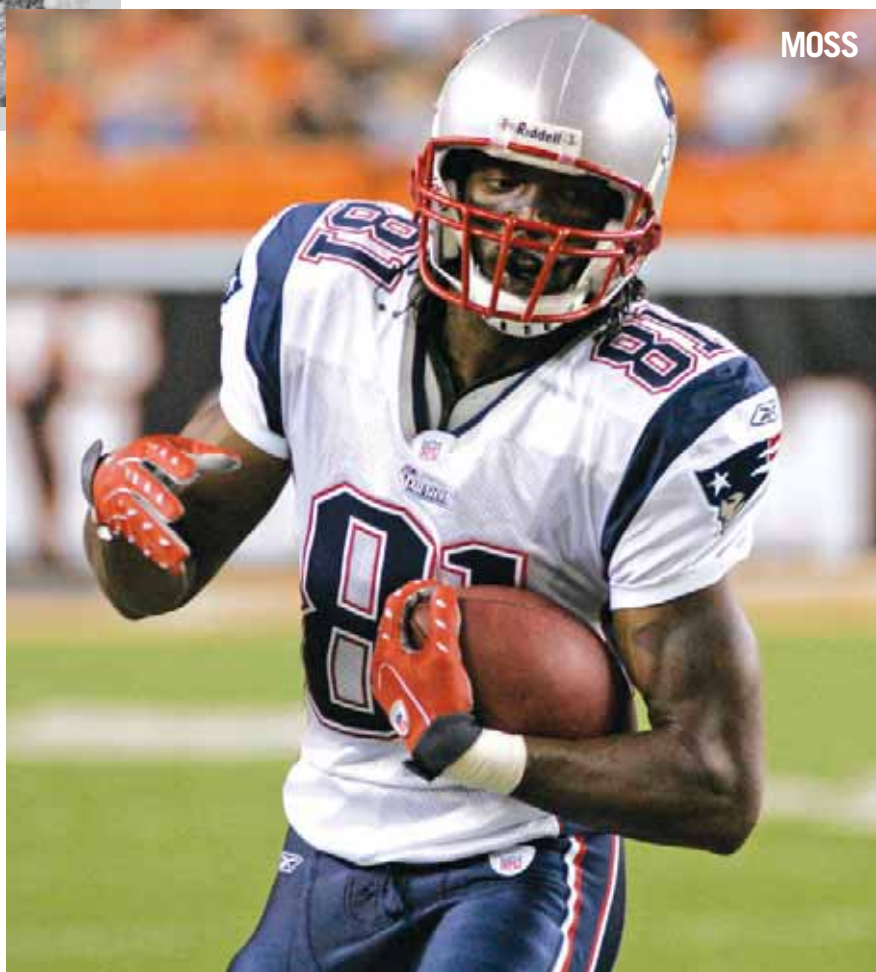
Forefathers of the modern receiver, Hutson and Berry also took a relentless beating at the line of scrimmage, down the sideline and across the middle of the field. Borderline assault of receivers was not only acceptable, it was encouraged.

a group of receivers as dominant as the ones taking the field on Sundays today. At the turn of the 20th century, when the gridiron game was just generating steam, a pair of college coaches from football afterthoughts, Wesleyan and Saint Louis, took the game by complete surprise.

Bosey Reiter and Eddie Cochems, each credited with developing the legal overhand, forward pass, designed the play to help their smaller teams compete with the much larger juggernauts of Army, Harvard and Yale in the early 1900s. Little did they know what they had created. Through many obstacles, including 15-yard penalties for incomplections, turnovers for drops and an overwhelming resistance to change, the play became a staple of the college and, eventually, the professional game.

Regardless of who truly had the first idea to take the egg-shaped pigskin to the air, odds are the innovators never envisioned the modern players who would one day be on the receiving end of their creation.

The sport has undergone a changing of the



**MOSS**



After teams averaged just 17.2 points per game during the 1977 season, the NFL instituted sweeping changes to ensure a more offensive-friendly sport. Linemen were allowed to extend their arms in pass blocking, giving quarterbacks an extra second or two to find their target, and receivers could no longer be grabbed, jabbed or clotheslined after 5 yards past the line of scrimmage.

Thanks to the changes and the installation of the quick-hitting West Coast offense around the same time, scoring began to tick upward and an emphasis was placed on athletic receivers who could generate big plays.

The late 1980s and early 1990s then set the tone for the ensuing golden era. It is no coincidence that the playmakers of today grew up watching a collection of all-time greats, including Rice, Michael Irvin, Tim Brown and Cris Carter, who all took the wide receiver position to heights previously unseen.

These Hall of Fame wideouts might have led the way for receivers, but with most teams still focusing on a ground-and-pound style of offense, many of their numbers were suppressed. If the Dallas offense of the past had matched the Cowboys' pass-happy attack of the present, Irvin might have finished his career with numbers similar to Rice.

Those pass catchers have given way to the new breed of wideouts, players who have taken the baton and since changed the game. In just the last decade, Moss has shattered Rice's single-season touchdown mark and Calvin Johnson has claimed the San Francisco great's record for yards in a season.

In fact, five of the top 15 receiving-yard campaigns on record have occurred in the past five years, and nine have taken place since 2000. Bryant already owns three of the top seven seasons for receiving touchdowns in Cowboys history, and Jones, in 2014, posted the most receiving yards in a season by a Falcons wideout. Both have yet to celebrate their 27th birthday.

With production comes confidence, a trait this group of receivers has in abundance. When Bryant is thrown a fade against a 5-foot-9 cornerback in the back of the end zone, everyone in the stadium, from the superstar receiver to the helpless defender, knows who is coming down with the catch.

"When it comes to football, it's a mindset and having a mentality," Bryant said. "I honestly believe when I'm in there, I feel like there's nothing I can't do."

Don't expect those marks to last for long, however, as the new crop of receivers continue to outmatch the production of their elders. The 2014 NFL Draft produced the greatest seasons by rookie receivers in NFL record books, boasting three 1,000-yard efforts and two double-digit touchdown producers. Odell Beckham Jr. took the league by storm, claiming Offensive Rookie of the Year honors, actually overshadowing incredible performances from his first-year peers Mike Evans, Kelvin Benjamin, Jordan Matthews and Sammy Watkins.

"It normally takes receivers a few years to get comfortable in the league," Panthers wide receivers coach Ricky Proehl told ESPN, "but a lot of these guys have made an immediate impact. And I'm not talking about a small impact. I'm talking about a big one."

And it's hard to believe, but the draft class of 2015, led by Amari Cooper, has the potential to be just as good.

Viewed originally as more sin than sensation, the pass has grown from a change-of-pace trick to the basis in which offenses are built. And once an afterthought, receivers have not only emerged as reliable contributors, but are now considered some of the top playmakers in the game.

The golden era of receivers is upon us, and it doesn't appear, to be ending soon. If the sport has taught us anything, though, it's that this time in the sun won't last forever. Enjoy this age of high-flying aerial acrobatics, and players like Bryant and Jones, while it's still here.



JAMES SMITH/DALLAS COWBOYS



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JEFF SULLIVAN

# SOME OF THE THOUGHTS THAT RUN THROUGH AN OVERSIZED, BALD HEAD

In a website column last week, I wrote that losing rookie defensive end Randy Gregory was a bigger blow to the club than the Dez Bryant injury. In my attempt to illustrate this claim, I wrote that Dez was the fifth-most indispensable member of the offense behind, in order, Tony Romo, Tyron Smith, Zack Martin and Jason Witten. Travis Frederick was next, and I didn't rank the remainder.

The thought process has to be two-fold, not only the player himself, but who is behind him on the depth chart. There's a significant drop off if Witten or Romo misses time, whereas, for me, Joseph Randle and Darren McFadden are interchangeable. Heck, I'm not alone in being excited about Christine Michael taking some carries, too. Don't think the team loses much with Mackenzy Bernadeau starting in favor of an injured Ronald Leary at guard.

And while Dez is obviously on another level than Terrance Williams, talent-wise, the latter has already proven capable of stretching the field and scoring touchdowns. He just needs to be more consistent with fewer dropped balls. There's a difference between the official statistic "dropped passes" and balls that elite, top-tier wideouts like Dez haul in.

Still, my thinking was that this offense isn't going to stop scoring points. There will just be less-electric receivers catching passes, maybe fewer long-scoring completions. Now, if Romo breaks a collarbone, Dallas isn't making the playoffs. It's just not happening. And that's the case with a lot of teams. Take away Tom Brady, Andrew Luck, Aaron Rodgers, Russell Wilson or Philip Rivers, and those clubs look a whole lot different.

Anyway, in talking about the offense for that column, I started thinking about the most indispensable players on the defense. Will rank the top six, and for these purposes, let's go ahead and make Rolando McClain and Greg Hardy eligible. Not including Orlando Scandrick, though, because he's out for the season.



## 1) DE TYRONE CRAWFORD

He was the best defensive player on the field for either team in the opener against the Giants, and here's guessing that's the case for the majority of the season. Not saying he's J.J. Watt, but he's in that next tier of elite linemen. There is a zero percent chance that he doesn't earn his first Pro Bowl nod if he stays healthy this season. His presence alters the entire defense because he's commanding more and more double-team blocking schemes. Fantastic draft pick, too, taken in the third round (81st overall) in 2012.

## TRIVIA TIME

- 1) Four different veteran wideouts, each of whom tallied at least 5,000 career yards, led the Cowboys in receiving yards from 2001-04. Name each of the four.
- 2) Name the four current NFL franchises that have never played in a Super Bowl.
- 3) Name four of the five current Cowboys who played at Oklahoma State.

**2) LB SEAN LEE** – Now at weak-side linebacker to provide him more opportunities to make plays while also seeing less physical contact, thus hopefully decreasing his injury risk, Lee is the quarterback of the unit, understands the schemes as well as the coaching staff, and he's seemingly involved or close by on every play. No linebacker has more interceptions since coming into the league, which is amazing considering the amount of games he has missed.

**3) DE GREG HARDY** – Pass rush, pass rush, pass rush. That's the key to a strong defense, and few have proven more capable of reaching the quarterback. Even playing just 12 games this year, double-digit sacks are still doable. And no one should be more motivated. This guy's motor should be in whatever comes after overdrive.

**4) CB BRANDON CARR** – With Scandrick gone, he has to be the man, and he certainly looked the part against Odell Beckham Jr. in Week 1. Yes, he's been a disappointment when considering his big-time free agent deal in 2012, but he has played better overall than many give him credit for. And he plays every snap, hasn't missed a game in seven-plus years in the NFL. Has really helped Morris Claiborne as well, and is one of the most-liked and respected players on the team.

**5) DE DeMARCUS LAWRENCE** – Especially with Gregory and Hardy sidelined these next few weeks, the second-year pass rusher needs to make plays, much like he did in the postseason in January. Even if he's not racking up sacks, the Cowboys need a few quarterback hurries per game.

**6) S J.J. WILCOX** – In many ways, Barry Church and Wilcox are equally important, but have always believed that Wilcox could be more of a playmaker with greater potential for bigger hits and interceptions. And early on, it appears he has taken a leap of sorts this season. That would be huge for this defense. Never a bad thing to have receivers looking for the safety over the middle.

## TRIVIA ANSWERS:

- 1) Rocket Ismail, Joey Galloway, Terry Glenn and Keyshawn Johnson
- 2) Cleveland Browns, Detroit Lions, Houston Texans and Jacksonville Jaguars
- 3) Dez Bryant, Joseph Randle, Brandon Weeden, Dan Bailey and Tyler Patmon



Just imagine, on the morning of Sept. 13, forecasting that the Dallas Cowboys would be 2-0, both division wins, eight days thereafter and fans would be crestfallen. Vegas wasn't even taking odds on that possibility. Such is the reality of the current situation. Know why the NFL is the most engrossing, brilliant television the world has to offer? The scripts are whatever is beyond unpredictable. And that's the best drama there is.

Before delving into Tony Romo's injury, the forecast for the remainder of the year and such, let's review what we thought we knew when the season began. The Eagles would be among the premier half-dozen teams in the league, with perhaps the top-scoring offense. They would run the ball like Oklahoma in the wishbone 30, 40 years ago: left, right, off-tackle, draws and who knows what else.

And Washington was going to be terrible, maybe win three games. Then there are the Saints losing at home to a rookie quarterback. Each year, seems the league is more and more hard to gauge. Philadelphia looked like quite possibly the most inept offense this side of Antarctica's Air Force. Maybe just one week, but Washington appeared pretty solid against the Rams.

OK, here's the deal, simple, direct. No trying to dust this one with sugar and varied yummy toppings. This stinks. This is borderline depressing. This could very well end up being the best football team Romo ever plays for, and he was able to enjoy it for less than six quarters. That's cruel. Also, while Brandon Weeden looked superb completing all seven of his pass attempts in the winning cause, there's a difference – a ginormous difference – between coming off the bench when the opposing team hasn't watched a second of film on you and being the starter throughout the preceding week.



I'm not sure we can predict what Weeden will produce, or how prepared he is to lead an elite team. Whether he can drive an offense down the field in the final possession trailing by four points. Regardless, we are going to find out because for likely two months or so, give or take a week or two, Weeden is the guy.

I've written this before the last seven years, and was actually talking about it with some friends last week before this happened. The drop-off from starting quarterback to second-string is beyond description. Not even just at the NFL level, but in college, high school, Pop Warner as well. Seems like 99 percent of the time that the No. 2 is in another zip code from the starter. More so than any position in sports. So much is invested, time and financially speaking, toward an NFL season and with just one snap of the football, it all changes. Significantly, too. This fascinates me.

Again, I honestly wasn't overly losing my mind about the Dez Bryant injury. Thought the Cowboys would still score points and the defense was more improved than anyone realized. Romo is different. For me, he was the most indispensable player on the team. Now, if the defense continues this replication of Doomsday, then maybe, just maybe this is going work out and they lose a few, win five or six, and Romo returns around Thanksgiving primed for a stretch run and the playoffs.

No idea as of this writing about Romo's timeline, so this is speculation. However, have some information about Dez. Do not buy into this talk about 10, 12 weeks, whatnot. It's irresponsible reporting. Look, the healing of an injury can always change. Setbacks occur. Just like they do for us. We're all human. That said, here and now, Dez should be back in four or five weeks, definitely in October. This should kind of be obvious since the Cowboys didn't place him on short-term injured reserve, which is eight weeks.

There is no greater sign of a team on the championship cusp than winning ugly, and the Cowboys brought that to an entirely new level in the first two weeks of the season. Not sure how many teams have won an NFL game with 18 penalties and minus their top player once Romo went down. The depth the front office and Jason Garrett have developed and built is astounding. A few years ago, losing Romo and Dez would have equated to six wins at best.

Not that he's invoking memories of Jim Brown or Bo Jackson, but after two games, I think it's time for Darren McFadden to start next week against the Falcons. This isn't a knock on Joseph Randle. Just feel like McFadden is a better receiver and hits the gaps a little quicker, more decisive.

Can't even imagine what DeMarco Murray was thinking Sunday night. There's a lesson there, one which will never, ever, ever be followed or learned. The way professional sports works now, the athlete really has to sign with the highest bidder. No one will ever convince me Murray wanted to leave this team for a second.

Sean Lee was ridiculous with 14 tackles, two for loss and two passes defended. And he's only going to improve each week. The Eagles, who signed 17 running backs in the off-season, finished with 7 rushing yards on 17 carries.

## CRYSTAL BALL

Should be another ugly win, the Falcons just aren't talented enough on defense to limit Dallas to less than 24 points or so. And their offense can't score that much, despite Julio Jones being a top-three wideout.

**COWBOYS 23, FALCONS 20.**



*Jeff Sullivan is the author of "America's Team: The Official History of the Dallas Cowboys." Follow him on Twitter, @SullyBaldHead, or email comments to [jsullivan@dallascowboys.net](mailto:jsullivan@dallascowboys.net).*





# 20

# INSIDE THE



# 368

Danny McCray was brought back to the Cowboys this season because of his special teams prowess, and he proved as much with a block of an Eagles punt in the third quarter, the first block of any kind in his career. Kyle Wilber then scooped up the ball and returned it 26 yards for the score, the first touchdown of his career. The last time the Cowboys returned a blocked punt for a touchdown was on Sept. 13, 1992 at the Giants when Ken Norton blocked a punt that Robert Williams returned 3 yards to the end zone. That's a span of 368 games.

# 2-0

Dallas is now 2-0 to start the season for the first time since 2008, and for the 25th time overall in its history. The victory also marked the first time since the 1992 season that the Cowboys beat division opponents in back-to-back games to start the season. The team has now won four straight in Philadelphia, which matches its second-longest road streak in the series (also 1975-78) behind only a five-game winning streak in Philly from 1968-72. The Cowboys have extended their overall road winning streak to 10 games now, which began at Washington on Dec. 22, 2013, the longest in team history since the 2006-07 seasons. In addition, Dallas has won its last six regular-season games.



# 14

Sean Lee was a monster in this game, as he recorded 14 tackles, including nine solo, and intercepted a pass in the end zone to end an Eagles threat. He even recovered an on-side kick at the end of the game just to put a cap on his stellar night. After two outings this year, he's leading the team with 23 tackles, based on coaches' film. Also, no other linebacker has more interceptions than Lee (12) since he entered the league in 2010.





# 10

# NUMBERS



Terrance Williams scored a 42-yard touchdown on a slant route in the fourth quarter, which continued a trend for the wide receiver, having caught 10 of his 37 passes for 20-plus yards last season. Williams' average of 21 yards-per-reception against the Eagles also built on his successful 2014 campaign when he posted eight games with an average of at least 15 yards-per-catch. That tied for the third most in the NFL with the Cowboys winning seven of the eight outings in which Williams achieved the feat.

The much-anticipated matchup of running back DeMarco Murray against his old club turned into a mere afterthought as the Cowboys defense held their former teammate to just 2 yards on 13 carries and the Eagles ground game as a whole to a mere 7 yards. In fact, until he picked up 11 yards on Philadelphia's final drive, Murray had a minus-9 total for the game. He finished with a .15 yards-per-carry average, the second-worst yards-per-carry mark on a minimum of 10 rush attempts forced by a Dallas defense in team history. The lowest came on Nov. 4, 1985 against St. Louis Cardinals running back Ottis Anderson, who averaged minus-.91 yards-per-carry, rushing 11 times for minus-10 yards. Meanwhile, the Cowboys' rushing attack combined for 109 yards, as Joseph Randle totaled 51 yards on 18 carries with Darren McFadden adding another 31 yards on 10 tries.





# GRADING THE GAME



**A**

## QUARTERBACKS

Tony Romo was on his way to a good, not great day when he left the game with a fractured clavicle. Brandon Weeden didn't look rattled in relief, completing 7-of-7 passes for 73 yards and the game-sealing touchdown.



**A**

## DEFENSIVE LINE

The Eagles' rushing total says it all: 17 carries for 7 yards. Philly averaged 0.4 yards per carry against the Cowboys' front, and DeMarco Murray was a non-factor. Props to Nick Hayden for a timely fumble recovery.



**B**

## RUNNING BACKS

Tough sledding against a talented Philly front. There weren't any jaw-dropping plays, but the Cowboys combined for 109 yards, impressive since Dallas was without Tony Romo for most of the second half.



**A+**

## LINEBACKERS

The game ball unequivocally has to go to Sean Lee. He was everywhere, leading the game with 14 tackles, two tackles for loss and a pick. His end zone interception of Sam Bradford was the play of the game.



**B**

## WIDE RECEIVERS

The Cowboys needed someone to step up with Dez Bryant sitting out. Terrance Williams' 42-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter certainly qualified. It wasn't a stand-out day on the whole.



**A+**

## SECONDARY

Sam Bradford finished his night with 224 passing yards, but the vast majority of that came with the game out of reach. Philly's final drive produced the Eagles' only touchdown. J.J. Wilcox recorded a pick as well.



**B**

## TIGHT ENDS

Jason Witten fought through two sprained ankles and a sprained knee to finish with seven catches for 56 yards – the epitome of an Ironman effort. Gavin Escobar almost scored in the first half, but fumbled later.



**A+**

## SPECIAL TEAMS

Chris Jones was absolutely phenomenal in making Darren Sproles a non-factor, and Danny McCray's blocked punt – returned for a touchdown by Kyle Wilber – was the turning point in the win.



**C+**

## OFFENSIVE LINE

Far too many penalties for this offensive line. The unit was penalized at least eight times, with some declined. Zack Martin was called twice for holding, and even Tyron Smith was flagged for a false start.

The flags were flying in this one as the Cowboys were penalized 18 times for 142 yards. That set a new team record, surpassing the 17 penalties the team suffered on Dec. 4, 1988 at Cleveland, a game Dallas lost, 24-21. The Cowboys also had 16 penalties at Philadelphia on Oct. 23, 1988, which is tied for the third most in club record books. With the Eagles getting called for eight penalties of their own, the 26 total equaled the most by both teams during a single game in Cowboys history. Dallas is currently on pace to earn 168 penalties for the season, which would shatter the previous team record of 141, set in 1988.



**18**





**20**  
COWBOYS  
2-0



**10**  
EAGLES  
0-2

#### Scoring

	1	2	3	4	F
Dallas Cowboys	3	3	7	7	20
Philadelphia Eagles	0	0	0	10	10

#### 1ST QUARTER

Cowboys: 1:39 – Bailey 20 yd field goal

**DAL PHI**  
3 0

#### 2ND QUARTER

Cowboys: 0:00 – Bailey 28 yd field goal

6 0

#### 3RD QUARTER

Cowboys: 12:35 – Wilber 26 yd blocked punt return (Bailey kick) 13 0

#### 4TH QUARTER

Eagles: 14:17 – Parkey 46 yd field goal 13 3

Cowboys: 4:13 – Williams 42 yd pass from Weeden (Bailey kick) 20 3

Eagles: 1:21 – Matthews 6 yd pass from Bradford (Parkey kick) 20 10

#### COWBOYS LEADERS

Passing: Romo - 195 YDS, 0 TD, 0 INT

Rushing: Randle - 18 CAR, 51 YDS

Receiving: Williams - 4 REC, 84 YDS, 1 TD

Defense: Lee - 14 TKLS (9 SOLO)

## SCOUT'S TAKE



Can't say enough about the job this Cowboys secondary did against the Philadelphia passing game. The Eagles put so much pressure on your coverage with their exchanging of routes and how they like to run receivers across the field. Philly prides itself on causing confusion with its scheme, but there was none of that from the Dallas secondary. And Byron Jones was outstanding in

his performance against difficult tight end Zach Ertz. I believe it was the work Jones got in practice covering Jason Witten that prepared him for this matchup. Jones was safety-physical in his coverage, but also cornerback-savvy in the way that he played Ertz. The J.J. Wilcox interception was all from the effort of Jones running with Ertz to make that a contested play.

– Bryan Broadus

## fan reaction



**Bridgette Marie** What a game! So many mixed emotions... So glad we won and beat the Eagles! Take that Murray. We all know you cared about this game and we still beat your sorry team without Dez and Romo toward the end! I'm so sad that Romo is out! First Dez, now Romo! I hope it's not for the rest of the season! We did do pretty good at the end with out Romo and Dez, though! No matter what, Go Cowboys!! ★★★★★

**John O'Halloran** Eagles fan here. Sorry about Romo and Bryant. That's just awful. I never would wish injury against anyone I really do hope both of them have a speedy recovery. Good luck the rest of the season.

**Sammy Jo** The good news: My Cowboys won. The better news: Murray only rushed for 2 yards. The bad news: Romo is hurt. Let's all pray that he's going to be OK! Get well Romo. We need you. GO COWBOYS!

**David Coffin** Win is a win. GREAT defense Cowboys!! Held Murray to 2 yards. Glad to have Lee back!! Heal up Romo!!!

**Scott McLean** Amazing! 2-0. Both wins in the division (crucial). Going to be a fight now for our 'Boys without Romo and Dez. Weeden, show us you can make this happen. Go Dallas!!!

**Juan Puente** 18 penalties, no good. Cowboys need that fixed pronto. Defense – great Job!

**Roel Sanchez** Our entire team made an awesome effort after Tony Romo got hurt. We rallied, and we pulled out an outstanding win on the Eagles' home turf against two former players. ☆☆☆☆Way to go Cowboys! ☆☆☆☆

**Chris Brown** Well, Direct TV Tony Romo is out. Time to sign Cable TV Tony Romo. #crownies

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# CHANGE IN SEASON

By Mickey Spagnola

## THE COWBOYS MUST NOW MOVE FORWARD WITHOUT INJURED QUARTERBACK TONY ROMO.

PHILADELPHIA – No, not this. No way.

First, Dez Bryant goes down. Fractured fifth metatarsal in his right foot. Out like six weeks.

And now, Tony Romo. Fractured left clavicle late in the third quarter of this past Sunday's rather cathartic 20-10 victory over the Philadelphia Eagles here at The Linc.

It's one thing to lose wide Bryant for one and a half months. And that's bad enough since the Cowboys are trying to use a village to replace one of the top wide receivers in the National Football League.

But Romo, likely out for eight or so weeks, pending re-evaluation when the team returned to Dallas this past Monday, suffering the same injury that ended his 2010 season?

Both guys out? Got to be kidding. Almost preposterous to even imagine.

"He has to get examined further," Cowboys head coach Jason Garrett said, knowing he won't have Romo for this Sunday's game against the Atlanta Falcons. "We'll see the extent of it and make an evaluation."

Disaster struck for the Cowboys midway through the third quarter, leading 13-0 and facing a second-and-11 at their own 33-yard line. The Cowboys went empty, trying to spread out the Eagles defense, so that they could detect from where the blitzing defenders were coming, and they were coming fast and furious that second half after falling behind.

Under pressure, Romo tried to roll to his left, but in his haste, while under pressure, he dropped the football with Jordan Hicks bearing down on him. Then Hicks landed squarely on Romo, his left shoulder being driven awkwardly into the ground, where he laid on his back with 9:44 left in the third quarter.

There was no doubt something was bad. Romo never moved until the Cowboys doctors and trainers arrived to attend to him. And when those same trainers and doctors led Romo directly into the locker room, offensive doomsday was apparent for the Cowboys.

"I felt it, a little bit of a pop to it," said Romo, who at that point was 18-of-27 for 195 yards. "I've felt it before," reminding him of 2010 when he suffered a fractured left collarbone in the sixth game of the schedule against the Giants. He remained inactive for the next eight weeks and then the Cowboys put him on season-ending injured reserve with the team owning a 5-9 record and only two games to go.

This season is different, though. The Cowboys are 2-0, leading the NFC East by one game over Washington (1-1) with a two-game lead over the Eagles (0-2) and the Giants, which is actually a two and a half game lead over both since they already defeated those teams.

"It never feels good when you get hurt," Romo said, "but the NFL is really about adversity in games, how you handle it. The job for our football team is to find ways to win."

In other words, "next guy up" mentality. And brother, are the Cowboys testing the outer limits of Garrett's favorite saying since now



they are without their top two offensive performers, Romo and Bryant. And both were going to be significant if the Cowboys were going to run the ball with any efficiency after 2014 NFL rushing leader DeMarco Murray departed in free agency for Philadelphia.

The thinking was, as long as you had Romo throwing to Bryant, defenses would be so preoccupied with them that whoever was running the ball behind this offensive line would have room to roam. Now it's Brandon Weeden to Terrance Williams and Cole Beasley and Devin Street and Lucky Whitehead and Brice Butler and Jason Witten and Gavin Escobar and, oh yeah, Lance Dunbar.

But hey, if Sunday's performance is any indication, this team certainly is resilient.

Backup quarterback Weeden entered the game, and all he did was complete 7-of-7 passes for 73 yards and the clinching 42-yard touchdown pass to Williams to give the Cowboys a 20-3 lead with 4:13 left in the game.

Weeden is the starting quarterback until further notice, and the Cowboys must now sign another quarterback to the 53-man roster, and likely can create a roster spot by placing Romo on the injured reserve/recall list, which would mean he definitely must miss at least eight weeks. The Cowboys could simply move Kellen Moore from the practice squad to the 53-man roster. At least he's been in the league.

"I'm excited about the challenge, but I hate it for Tony," Weeden said. "I told him I'm going to really need his help."

Of course, no one on Sunday evening, or even going forward will be waving a white flag on the season. There are ways to win these games despite the losses, and the Cowboys certainly presented Exhibit A in Philly. Offensively, do a little bit of this, a little bit of that, and for heaven's sakes don't commit 18 penalties, which somehow they overcame.

Throw in some dynamic special teams, as they did against the Eagles, Danny McCray's blocked punt turning into Kyle Wilber's recovery return for a touchdown, and Chris Jones' punting (45.8) neutralizing Darren Sproles in the return game.

And then play some big-time defense, as the Cowboys have done so far this season, not giving up a touchdown on its own until there was only 1:21 remaining in this one, having gone nearly eight full quarters without allowing a touchdown.

And furthermore, the Eagles might want to reconsider the headline on their game program that read over the picture of Murray, "How Do You Like Me Now?"

Uh, the Cowboys defense held Murray to all of 2 yards on 13 carries, which now gives him 21 carries for 11 yards in two games with his new team.

Wonder how they liked the Cowboys defense now, and backup quarterback and backup receivers?



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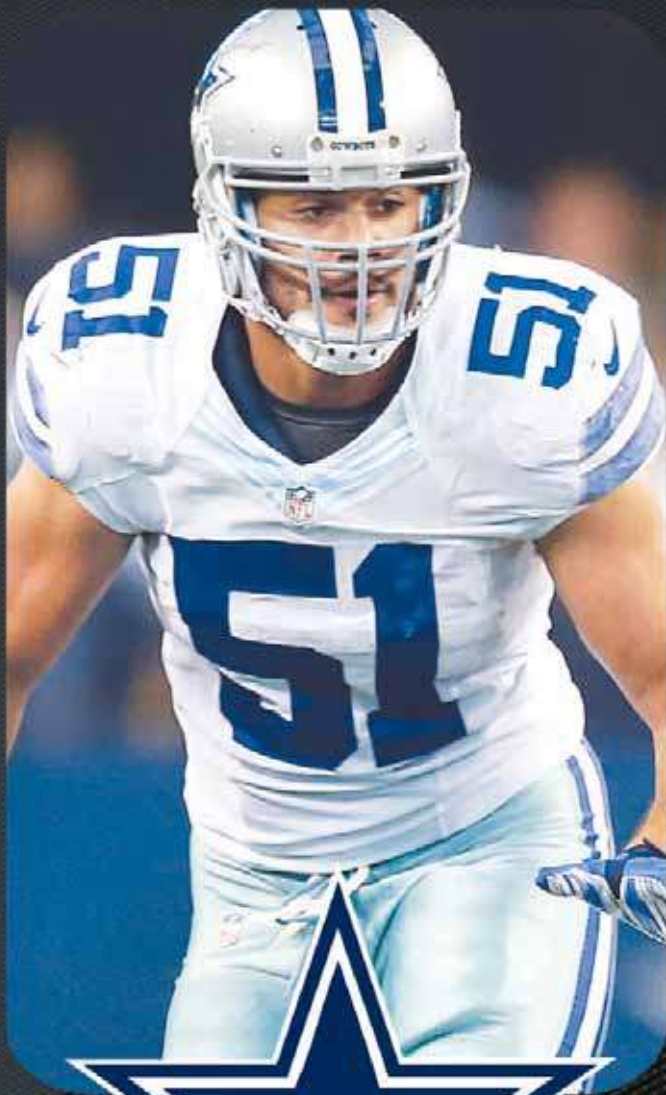


# GETTING TO KNOW SAM, MIKE AND V

LEE & HITCHENS: JAMES SMITH/DALLAS COWBOYS; WILBER: AP PHOTO/KEVIN TERRELL



By Jeff Sullivan



W  
WILL

The Cowboys' linebacker corps has been built specifically with versatile players who can line up at any of the three positions.

So these three guys, Sam, Mike and Will, walk into a bar ... no, wait, that's not right.

They actually walk on to a football field, each and every day throughout the fall, from the youngest of the Pop Warner kids where the helmet is too big for their head to the Dallas Cowboys. Every team in between, too. They all have a Sam, a Mike (sometimes two) and a Will.

We're not speaking of first names, and here's guessing the majority of football followers know that. We're talking about linebackers, the guys in the middle of the defense who run forward, backward, side-to-side, more or less every direction on the compass.

And while the Cowboys most certainly have their "Sam" (strong-side), "Mike" (middle) and "Will" (weak-side), just like every other team, their linebackers – Andrew Gachkar, Anthony Hitchens, Sean Lee, Keith Smith, Kyle Wilbur and Damien Wilson, who all weigh within 10 pounds of one another – are more or less interchangeable, meaning each can play all three positions. This isn't by accident.

"Oh yeah, most definitely. We wanted versatility when we brought each of these guys on board," said Matt Eberflus, in his fifth season as the team's linebackers coach. "I feel like that's a good thing. The more versatile you are, the more reps you can get, the more they can plug you in at different positions. Then who knows, if anyone, God forbid, goes down, we can fill in for them because everyone knows each position."



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GACHKAR



WILSON



SMITH

"Also, I feel like when they all know what to do at different positions, we can even rotate guys in for a set of downs or a possession, like the defensive line does."

However, it's worth noting that when defensive coordinator Rod Marinelli rotates the defensive linemen, it's ends replacing ends, and tackles replacing tackles. Really, outside of rookie cornerback/safety Byron Jones, there's not another player on the roster, other than the linebackers, who plays a different position. A few of the offensive linemen could move from, say, tackle to guard or vice versa if need be, but that hasn't happened the last few seasons. Even at wide receiver, it's not like Cole Beasley is going to move from the slot to the outside with Dez Bryant injured. The positions are pretty structured at the highest level, heck, even in college.

What makes linebackers unique is that in a 4-3 defense, four linemen and three linebackers, the latter three all have similar responsibilities. In layman's terms, the Sam takes on the lead blockers on run plays and is responsible for picking up the tight end releasing on pass routes.

This was originally called the strong-side because he lined up wherever the tight end did back in the days when the most common formation was the 21 personnel: quarterback, fullback, tailback, tight end and two wide receivers. Now, with all the different offensive looks, that's not always the case, which is one of, if not the main reason, linebackers need to be more interchangeable.

The Mike needs to cover the most ground, especially side-to-side, but in a Tampa 2 scheme or any hybrid, he'll also go north to south, dropping back 20, 25 yards in coverage down the middle of the field. In addition, he calls the plays, and can pick up the blocks that the Sam couldn't against the run. And if the quarterback is mobile, which is becoming more and more the case, the Mike will be his spy, looking for not only designed runs, but those that ensue after a quick read or two. These types of scrambles can usually pick up more yards than the former because the secondary is downfield and the defensive front has pushed the pocket.

That leaves the Will, which in the Cowboys' current scheme is actually the playmaking position. Think Pro Football Hall of Famer Derrick Brooks. And certainly not by coincidence, this is where we currently find Lee, who spent 2011-13 at middle linebacker.

While the job responsibilities are many and complex to decipher, with the other two linebackers picking up the blockers, the weak-side ideally has the freedom to run around and make plays. It also offers protection, fewer blocks, much less physical contact before meeting the ball carrier. The Will is usually the team's quickest linebacker, with the ability to read offenses a must.

Lee played the Will in college and also as a rookie coming off the bench in 2010, although that was in a 3-4 defensive formation, which is a somewhat different animal with the two Mikes. Still, when head coach Jason Garrett told him about the position change this past February, Lee, who missed all of last season after suffering a torn ACL in minicamp, was ready, willing and able to embrace the new gig.

"My first feeling was confidence, just because I had played there before. But to be honest, as a linebacker, we're pretty versatile where we can play all the positions," Lee said. "Also, some of the stuff is quite similar to calls and keys at the Mike. In today's game, we need to maximize what we can do, what we can contribute at linebacker because there's so much the offenses are throwing at us."





EBERFLUS

"And we're in more and more nickel situations, where a linebacker really needs to be able to play all three. So yeah, the Mike and the Will in our defense are largely similar, but there are also new scenarios to learn. When I'm watching film or studying the playbook, the game plan, my focus is on the Will, but my process is the same in terms of dealing with my keys."

To say this season is important for Lee is kind of like saying Noah encountered a few puddles along the way. The immensely talented, extremely polite and well-spoken linebacker really doesn't want to talk about the past, which is how Garrett wants all of his players to be. But, he does allow how healthy his left knee is. The ACL injury wasn't a complete surprise, as Lee partially tore it during his senior year at Penn State, in 2010. After missing three weeks then, he somehow played five more seasons on that same tear.

"The doctors, the trainers here with the Cowboys, they all deserve a lot of credit for somehow keeping that leg strong," Lee said. "I do have more confidence in my left knee, that's for sure. When there's a partial tear, there's no way not to think about that. Now it's fully healed, and I'm excited to be a part of this defense. There's a lot of talent, but the key is showing that talent on the field and building continuity. That doesn't just magically happen."

And while Lee was asked to make the shift from the middle to the weak-side, Hitchens, Mr. Versatility himself, the Swiss Army Knife of the Cowboys, has played all three positions – in the same game, no less – and last year started at least one game at each spot. He began this season playing the Mike, but could find himself moving around again once Rolando McClain returns in Week 5. Regardless, Hitchens

will be prepared no matter where the coaches ask him to line up.

"I just think it's the scheme on defense," Hitchens said. "We have a good scheme where all the guys can play all three spots. We're basically the same body type. Most other linebackers are bigger outside guys and littler inside."

"We do a lot of things where we all play off each other. I feel like in our scheme you can do that, but there are not a lot of schemes you can do that. Our coaches do a good job here of 'trans-coaching' us, and making us study other positions early on."

"Coach (Eberflus), at first he'll plug you in, say, at Will. Halfway through training camp, he will switch you and be like, OK, I want you to do Mike now. Then eventually he'll put you at Sam. He always put everyone's numbers up and put all the positions that you possibly could play. So you always have to be studying. I like that about coach. He's making everybody think, and if you know what the other two guys are doing, it makes your job a little easier."

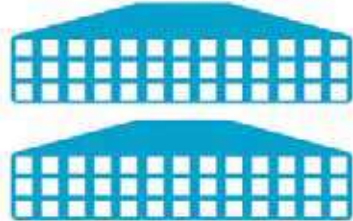
Hitchens was perhaps the surprise player of last season, although the Cowboys didn't blink when many criticized them for taking the linebacker from Iowa in the fourth round. The front office and scouting department couldn't care less where the Mel Kipers of the world have players on their draft boards. And one of the reasons they liked Hitchens, who played Will in college, so much more than others was because of his versatility.

"We're looking for all Will linebackers, guys that can run and guys that can play in space," Eberflus said. "That's what we're looking for, so we know that the player at that point could play Mike and could play Sam."



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WILBER



"You look at their skill set. I think you put, on paper, your best space player at Will linebacker and then your second-best space player at the Mike and then either a younger player or a guy that's learning the position at the Sam. Then you try to work those guys into the Mike and into the Will position.

"We don't focus so much on the playbook as much as we focus on our technique, like what to do, how to take on a block, your keys to read. Because your keys will take you everywhere you want to go in this defense."

That's really the crux of the how the Cowboys view linebackers. They want the best ones, and they will figure out which of the three positions they will play later. Garrett has a theory on this as a whole, saying, "If you start drafting and signing guys to fit a specific need,

and get away from taking the best football player, the guy who fits into what we're trying to do here, you're going to get into trouble pretty quickly in terms of your roster."

Eberflus takes this to another level, saying that he's looking for guys who can make plays, guys who make hits and everyone stops what they are doing and says, "Wow, did you see that? Did you hear that?"

It's not about Mike, Sam or Will. It's not about their 40-time or how many reps they lifted. It's about a football player. And more times than not, a football player tends to stand out to an NFL head coach, a 40-year scout, a diehard fan or honestly, just a kid walking in off the street.

"If you're a hitter, you're going to get respected right away," Eberflus said. "If you can make plays and are productive, guess what, you're going to get respect. I would say that there's a term in my linebacker room that I think everybody can grasp onto. It's 'hits on the ball.'"

"So to me, if you or my daughter, who is 15, or my son is 9, if they go up there and they say, 'Golly, who's No. 50?' And the reason they say that is because – and they know who Sean is, but I'm saying if they're just a layman up there – they could say that because he was hitting the ball. He was tackling the ball, he was intercepting the ball, he was causing a fumble, he was just around the ball every single snap. If the ball was there, he was there with it, and he was hitting the ball the whole time. So that to me measures a linebacker's production. All this other stuff, taking on a block and all that other stuff is important, but that's not the bottom line. Line One in the linebacker description here is to hit the ball, and I'm going to play the guys that hit the ball."

So at the end of the day, Sam, Mike and Will walk on to a football field, but which player lines up at each of those positions doesn't really matter. The Cowboys just want guys making plays, a responsibility that this linebacker corps is more than capable of handling.

HITCHENS & LEE







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# HACIENDO

Hispanic fans' support and enthusiasm for the Cowboys extend well beyond Hispanic Heritage Month. That's why the team reaches out to its Spanish-speaking fans 365 days a year through partnerships with leaders in Hispanic media, which include radio and television programming, community events, digital/social media, and the new Somos Cowboys blog on DallasCowboys.com.

"We're integrating the full fan experience so that folks in Mexico, Central America, South America, Spain and Spanish speakers throughout the world can get closer to the Cowboys in a very unique way," noted Victor Villalba, the play-by-play voice of the Cowboys' Spanish broadcast and the manager of the club's Spanish Language Properties. "It goes well beyond broadcasting games to your affiliates during the football season. With Somos Cowboys, which includes web and digital content and social media, we're bringing our expertise in Spanish properties to fans throughout each week of the year, not just Sundays in the fall."

"This is something completely new for our fans around the world who speak Spanish, and the reaction has been great so far," said Ambar Garcia, the team's new Spanish language correspondent for Somos Cowboys. "The blog is more personal. I'm writing about my experiences at the game and around the players. I'm telling stories so that the fans can experience what I'm experiencing."



By Kristi Scales

FANS (LEFT): AP PHOTO/BRANDON WADE; FANS (RIGHT): AP PHOTO/SHARON ELLMAN  
STADIUM: AP PHOTO/RIC TAPIA; GARCIA: JEREMIAH JHASS/DALLAS COWBOYS



# SU MARCA



**The Cowboys are making their mark with Spanish-speaking fans.**

Garcia has already heard from fans in Mexico, Argentina, Spain, Costa Rica and Honduras, just to name a few. Hardcore fans who even if they can't see the games, keep up with the team online.

"Everyone is excited to see it grow," Garcia continued. "There will be something new every day on Somos Cowboys, whether it's a video or a blog. It gives fans the opportunity to connect with the team and the players.

Spanish-speaking fans are also encouraged to use social media, Somos Cowboys on Twitter and Facebook, to send Garcia questions that she then uses every week when doing interviews with the players. By asking their own questions, the fans can get to know the players' personalities and learn about them away from the football field. In that regard, Garcia is acting as a point of connection between the fans and the players.

"The fact that our Somos Cowboys blog is on DallasCowboys.com shows how important our Spanish-language content is," says Craig Zurek, the Cowboys' director of media and brand optimization. "The audiences blend. The blog will attract people who speak and read Spanish at all levels. It's an important cultural and lifestyle medium, rather than just language. It is fresh content, not an English-to-Spanish translation of something that was already written. It's not repurposing or translating. It's experiential."



To ensure a fan experience that is completely immersive, Zurek formed the DFW Hispanic Marketing Alliance, which includes Dallas Cowboys en Espanol, La Grande 107.5 FM in Dallas, Telemundo and the Spanish-language newspaper *Al Dia*. The Alliance allows the partners to engage locally within the Hispanic community and includes multiple events, promotions, broadcasts and programs such as Telemundo's Hispanic Business Salute.

"The 2014 Draft Party was the first time we really focused on promotion from La Grande and Telemundo," Zurek said. "A large percentage of the crowd was Hispanic. In spite of bad weather and a torrential downpour, and the fact that it was a Thursday night, we had a great turnout, larger than in 2012 and 2013. La Grande provided live music on the stage. That's when we knew, 'This works!'"

"We've seen results from other events, and you'll see the partnership at the Tailgate Party in Lot 9 of this year's Hispanic Heritage Game. But those partnerships will continue all year long, beyond this game."

Other partnerships are expanding on Cowboys games that have been airing south of the border, a tradition that has spanned five decades.

"The Cowboys were the first team to be broadcast live in Mexico every single game,"

said Carlos Nava, an ESPN Deportes reporter and the Dallas Cowboys Spanish Radio sideline reporter. "Tex Schramm, the former Cowboys general manager, had the idea to give the TV rights to Mexican broadcast companies. My dad told me that when he was young, the only game you could watch on a regular basis every weekend was the Cowboys."

"Another reason is that when American football exploded in popularity in Mexico in the 1970s, the Cowboys were winning everything with Tom Landry and Roger Staubach. It was a good combination: Being on TV every weekend and winning almost every weekend. The Cowboys also began their own Spanish Radio Network in the 1970s, and are now clearly the most popular NFL team among Hispanic fans. There are the Cowboys, and then everybody else."

Thanks to new agreements, Cowboys Spanish-language content is available throughout the week, not just game day.

"Three years ago, we formed a partnership with Yellow Entertainment," Zurek explained. "They are business people, but they are also lifelong Cowboys fans. They've taken the radio broadcasts in Mexico City and established a long-term presence on Grupo Radio Formula that includes game broadcasts and weekday programming. The Mexico City market is 33 million people, and we anticipate expanding the broadcasts into other key markets throughout Mexico."

"Now the goal is not only to engage longtime Cowboys fans that have followed the team for decades, but also to create new fans. The Spanish-speaking population, regardless of their level of acculturation, is more prone to access digital devices, especially mobile, than the population as a whole. Research shows this, so we needed to expand our reach into the digital realm. Somos Cowboys is our first major step with full backing of the team."

"As for television, on Telemundo we do training camp reports, the weekly half-hour show 'Vaqueros de Dallas,' four one-hour specials each year, as well as full game broadcasts of the preseason games. In addition to broadcasts or digital media, it's also very important to interact with fans locally, face-to-face, at events. That's why we rely heavily on our community relations department."

The Cowboys host events throughout the year targeted toward the Hispanic community, including Futbol Americano Play 60 Camps and the Play 60 Character Camp at AT&T Stadium.



"In the Hispanic culture, family brings people together and we celebrate watching football. We love the Cowboys," says Emily Cruz Robbins, the Cowboys' senior director of community relations, whose family roots extend into Spain and Mexico. "Whether or not it's because I'm Hispanic or just a football fan, I think football is about family and being together and celebrating the game. And for our team events, it's all about interaction with fans and their families."

Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders veteran Paige speaks Spanish fluently and makes a point to interact with fans in their own language.

"If I hear a fan speaking Spanish at one of our appearances, I try to jump in and bridge the language gap," says Paige. "People's eyes light up when I speak Spanish and they appreciate the gesture. That's why I learned to speak Spanish in the first place, to bridge a communication barrier. We can have conversations and enjoy the interaction. I also tweet as much as I can in Spanish. The following in Mexico is overwhelming. I get replies mostly from Mexico and Spain."

Whether it's a one-on-one conversation with a Cowboys cheerleader, attending a community event with Cowboys players, watching and/or listening to games, weekday Cowboys programming on the radio, or keeping followers informed online or by social media through Somos Cowboys, there are more opportunities than ever for Spanish-speaking fans to feel like a part of the team. More content and more access should translate into continued growth, not only of the Cowboys brand, but also for the game overall as well.

"It's impressive to see that American football is growing tremendously, not only locally, but in many Hispanic countries around the world," said Garcia. "I'm from the Dominican Republic, where baseball has dominated. But now football's popularity is really high. Seeing people's reaction, how everyone gets so excited about football, led me to apply for the new position with Somos Cowboys. Now we can reach fans anywhere in the world, and do so throughout the entire year."





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# GAME P



## RYAN, JONES ALREADY PROVIDING HIGHLIGHTS

BY MIKE RABUN

Matt Ryan is in his eighth NFL season, all of them having been spent with the Atlanta Falcons.

He has missed only two starts through all of that time and has thrown for at least 4,000 yards in each of the past four years. But during 2013 and 2014, he was also sacked a total of 75 times, among the most in the league, and over the course of his career he has won a lone playoff game.

Julio Jones has been a bright spot for Atlanta in recent years, when he has been healthy, but his 1,553 receiving yards in 2014 (third best in the NFL) contributed to a mere 7-9 Falcons record.

Attention, therefore, was not exactly riveted on those two heading into the current campaign – something that changed in a hurry when games began counting for real. At the conclusion of the opening week, the Ryan-to-Jones combo had become one of the league's highlight attractions.

Teams that do not have a large history of success, and Atlanta can be placed in that category, sometimes look at a particular season as one that can turn things around. That is the case this year with the Falcons, which following their disappointing effort in 2014, went out and hired Dan Quinn from Seattle as their head coach. Quinn, who was the Seahawks' defensive coordinator, has also spent time with the 49ers, Dolphins and Jets.

Quinn then hired a new offensive coordinator in the person of Kyle Shanahan, who had been in Cleveland. Both bring solid reputations to their new positions, al-

though Quinn faces a chore in his attempts to improve the Falcons' defense.

In Seattle, Quinn was in charge of what turned out to be the best defensive team in the NFL last season. The Falcons defense, meanwhile, was ranked last, surrendering just shy of 400 yards per game.

Given that, Atlanta probably needs to move the ball a lot this season and the Falcons, along with a lot of teams, opened the new campaign by doing just that. Pro football has become a passing game and nothing that happened during Week 1 changed this belief.

Of the league's 32 teams, 15 completed at least two-thirds of its passes. And a bunch more fell just short of that number. In days of yore, anything better than 50 percent was looked upon as being good, but those are now referred to as the Very Dark Ages. There were 50 touchdown passes thrown on the opening weekend while only 19 scores were earned on the ground.

Ryan and Jones provided a perfect example of what the NFL has become during the Falcons' dramatic win over Philadelphia to start the year. Jones caught 141 yards worth of passes against the Eagles, second most on opening day. Eight of his nine catches went for a first down and two of them for touchdowns. He was continually running free in the Philadelphia secondary, which is a sight the Falcons hope to see all season.

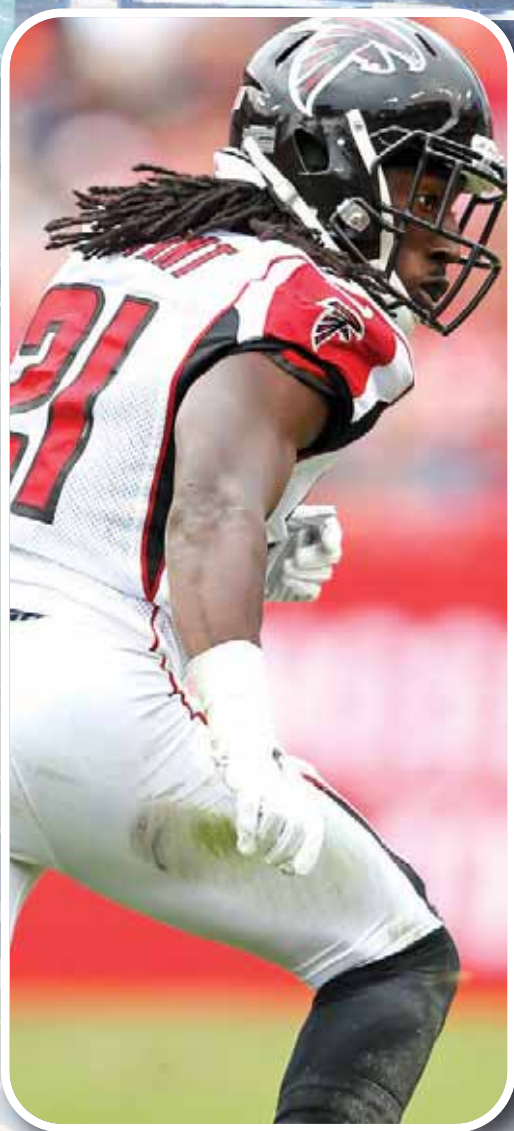
If they do, the Falcons will be a difficult team with which to deal in the NFC South. When it comes to figuring out a way to stop the Falcons this Sunday, therefore, the Cowboys know right where to start.



# REVIEW



AT



## MARQUEE MATCHUP



### FALCONS DB DESMOND TRUFANT vs. COWBOYS WR TERRANCE WILLIAMS

Instead of Des vs. Dez, Trufant will focus his outstanding coverage skills on Williams. Named to the 2015 All-Underrated Team by NFL.com analyst Elliot Harrison, Trufant has been a starter since the Falcons took him with the 22nd pick in 2013 out of Washington. He had more interceptions (three) than touchdowns allowed (two) in 2014 and was named Defensive Rookie of the Year by Pro Football Focus in 2013 after setting a team rookie record with 17 passes defended. With Dez Bryant sidelined by a foot injury, Williams moves into the spotlight in Big D. While his yardage totals dropped last season in his sophomore effort, Williams' 13 touchdown catches in 2013-14 ranked No. 1 among wide receivers in his draft class.





# GAME PREVIEW

## ATLANTA FALCONS

BY DAVE IVEY

Inspired by first-year head coach Dan Quinn, the Falcons entered the season with more energy than a triple espresso spiked with Red Bull. Before the win against Philadelphia, the coach himself was spotted running the steps of the Georgia Dome. "Coach Quinn brought us that energy," defensive tackle Jonathan Babineaux told the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. "What you saw out there is what you see in practice every day." Asked if the Falcons had come out with that much sizzle at any point last season under Mike Smith, Babineaux replied, "Um. Not so much."

### OFFENSE



Three-time Pro Bowl quarterback Matt Ryan passed for 342 yards in a 2012 victory against the Cowboys. Entering 2015, Atlanta was 38-5 when he posted a passer rating of 100-plus and 20-3 when he tossed three or more touchdown passes. It didn't take long for **JULIO JONES** to justify his new six-year, \$71 million contract, as he hauled in nine passes for 141 yards and two touchdowns in a 26-24 win against the Eagles on *Monday Night Football*. Jones (129) and veteran Roddy White (118) both topped the century mark in their last meeting with Dallas. Third-round pick Tevin Coleman launched his NFL career with 20 carries for 80 yards against Philadelphia.

### DEFENSE



A unit that finished 32nd in the NFL in total defense in 2014 held the high-octane Eagles to three first-half points and limited former Cowboy DeMarco Murray to just 9 yards on eight carries in Week 1. That's the lowest total since the 1970 AFL-NFL merger by a reigning rushing champion in his first game the following season. Safeties William Moore and **RICARDO ALLEN** each had an interception – Allen's sealed the victory with 1:11 to play – and third-year middle linebacker Paul Worrlow tallied a game-high 13 tackles. Rookie defensive end Vic Beasley Jr., the eighth overall pick out of Clemson, had a solid debut with three tackles, a deflection and one hit on the quarterback.

### SPECIAL TEAMS



Return specialist Devin Hester missed the season opener with a toe injury, leaving veteran **ERIC WEEMS** to handle punts and kickoffs. Hester broke Deion Sanders' NFL record with his 20th career return touchdown last year. The four-time Pro Bowler has scored twice against Dallas, both on receptions while with Chicago in 2010 and 2012. Forty-year-old Matt Bryant made all four field-goal attempts vs. the Eagles, extending his streak to 37 consecutive made field goals inside of 50 yards. Matt Bosher averaged a healthy 57.8 yards on four punts in the opener, dropping three inside the 20-yard line. Their coverage unit also did a decent job containing the dangerous Darren Sproles.

### DID YOU KNOW?

"Matty Ice" improved his record to a perfect 8-0 in home openers with the victory against the Eagles. In those eight wins, Ryan completed 68.7 percent of his passes (182-of-265) for 2,149 yards with 19 touchdowns and just four interceptions.



### OFF THE GRID

After four seasons in Indianapolis and three in Denver, sure-handed tight end **JACOB TAMME** signed a two-year deal with Atlanta in March. A fourth-round pick out of Kentucky in 2008, Tammé posted career highs with 67 catches for 631 yards and four touchdowns with the Colts in 2010. His totals slipped over the past few seasons with the Broncos due to the emergence of Julius Thomas, but he was always there when Peyton Manning needed an open target in critical situations. Tammé caught three passes for 19 yards in his Falcons' debut against Philadelphia.



JONES: CURTIS COMPTON/ATLANTA-JOURNAL CONSTITUTION VIA AP; ALLEN, RYAN & TAMME: AP PHOTO/BRYNN ANDERSON; WEEMS: AP PHOTO/DAVID GOODMAN





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# COWBOYS 2015 ROSTER

## GAME P

NO	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
3	Brandon Weeden	QB	6-4	228	4	Oklahoma State
5	Dan Bailey	K	6-0	195	5	Oklahoma State
6	Chris Jones	P	6-0	205	4	Carson Newman
9	Tony Romo	QB	6-2	230	13	Eastern Illinois
11	Cole Beasley	WR	5-8	180	4	SMU
13	Lucky Whitehead	WR	5-9	180	R	Florida Atlantic
15	Devin Street	WR	6-3	200	2	Pittsburgh
19	Brice Butler	WR	6-3	215	2	San Diego State
20	Darren McFadden	RB	6-1	220	8	Arkansas
21	Joseph Randle	RB	6-0	210	3	Oklahoma State
23	Corey White	CB	6-1	210	4	Samford
24	Morris Claiborne	CB	5-11	192	4	LSU
25	Lance Dunbar	RB	5-8	195	4	North Texas
26	Tyler Patmon	CB	5-10	188	2	Oklahoma State
27	J.J. Wilcox	S	6-0	212	3	Georgia Southern
30	Christine Michael	RB	5-10	221	3	Texas A&M
31	Byron Jones	CB	6-0	205	R	Connecticut
38	Jeff Heath	S	6-1	212	3	Saginaw Valley State
39	Brandon Carr	CB	6-0	210	8	Grand Valley State
40	Danny McCray	S	6-1	215	6	LSU
42	Barry Church	S	6-2	218	6	Toledo
44	Tyler Clutts	FB	6-2	250	5	Fresno State
50	Sean Lee	LB	6-2	238	6	Penn State
51	Kyle Wilber	LB	6-4	245	4	Wake Forest
52	Andrew Gachkar	LB	6-2	240	5	Missouri
56	Keith Smith	LB	6-0	232	2	San Jose State
57	Damien Wilson	LB	6-1	242	R	Minnesota
58	Jack Crawford	DT	6-5	288	4	Penn State
59	Anthony Hitchens	LB	6-0	235	2	Iowa
60	Davon Coleman	DT	6-2	295	2	Arizona State
65	Ronald Leary	G	6-3	320	3	Memphis
68	Doug Free	OT	6-6	325	9	Northern Illinois
70	Zack Martin	G	6-4	315	2	Notre Dame
71	La'el Collins	OL	6-4	315	R	LSU
72	Travis Frederick	C	6-4	315	3	Wisconsin
73	Mackenzey Bernadeau	G	6-4	322	8	Bentley
77	Tyron Smith	OT	6-5	320	5	USC
78	Charlie Brown	OT	6-5	297	5	USC
82	Jason Witten	TE	6-6	263	13	Tennessee
83	Terrance Williams	WR	6-2	208	3	Baylor
84	James Hanna	TE	6-4	260	4	Oklahoma

NO	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
87	Geoff Swaim	TE	6-4	260	R	Texas
88	Dez Bryant	WR	6-2	220	6	Oklahoma State
89	Gavin Escobar	TE	6-6	260	3	San Diego State
90	DeMarcus Lawrence	DE	6-3	265	2	Boise State
91	L.P. Ladouceur	LS	6-5	256	11	California
92	Jeremy Mincey	DE	6-4	280	8	Florida
93	Ken Bishop	NT	6-0	300	2	Northern Illinois
94	Randy Gregory	DE	6-5	255	R	Nebraska
96	Nick Hayden	DT	6-4	303	6	Wisconsin
97	Terrell McClain	DT	6-2	302	5	South Florida
98	Tyrone Crawford	DT	6-4	290	4	Boise State
99	Ryan Russell	DE	6-5	275	R	Purdue



### COWBOYS COACHING STAFF

**JASON GARRETT:** HEAD COACH

**Joe Baker:** Safeties

**Brett Bech:** Assistant Strength and Conditioning

**Rich Bisaccia:** Asst. Head Coach/Special Teams Coord.

**Ben Bloom:** Defensive Ends

**Gary Brown:** Running Backs

**Kevin Carberry:** Offensive Assistant

**Marc Colombo:** Offensive Assistant

**Derek Dooley:** Wide Receivers

**Matt Eberflus:** Linebackers

**Jerome Henderson:** Secondary

**Leon Lett:** Defensive Tackles

**Scott Linehan:** Offensive Coordinator

**Steve Loney:** Assistant Offensive Line

**Rod Marinelli:** Defensive Coordinator/Defensive Line

**Keith O'Quinn:** Assistant Special Teams

**Frank Pollack:** Offensive Line

**Mike Pope:** Tight Ends

**Kendall Smith:** Assistant Strength and Conditioning

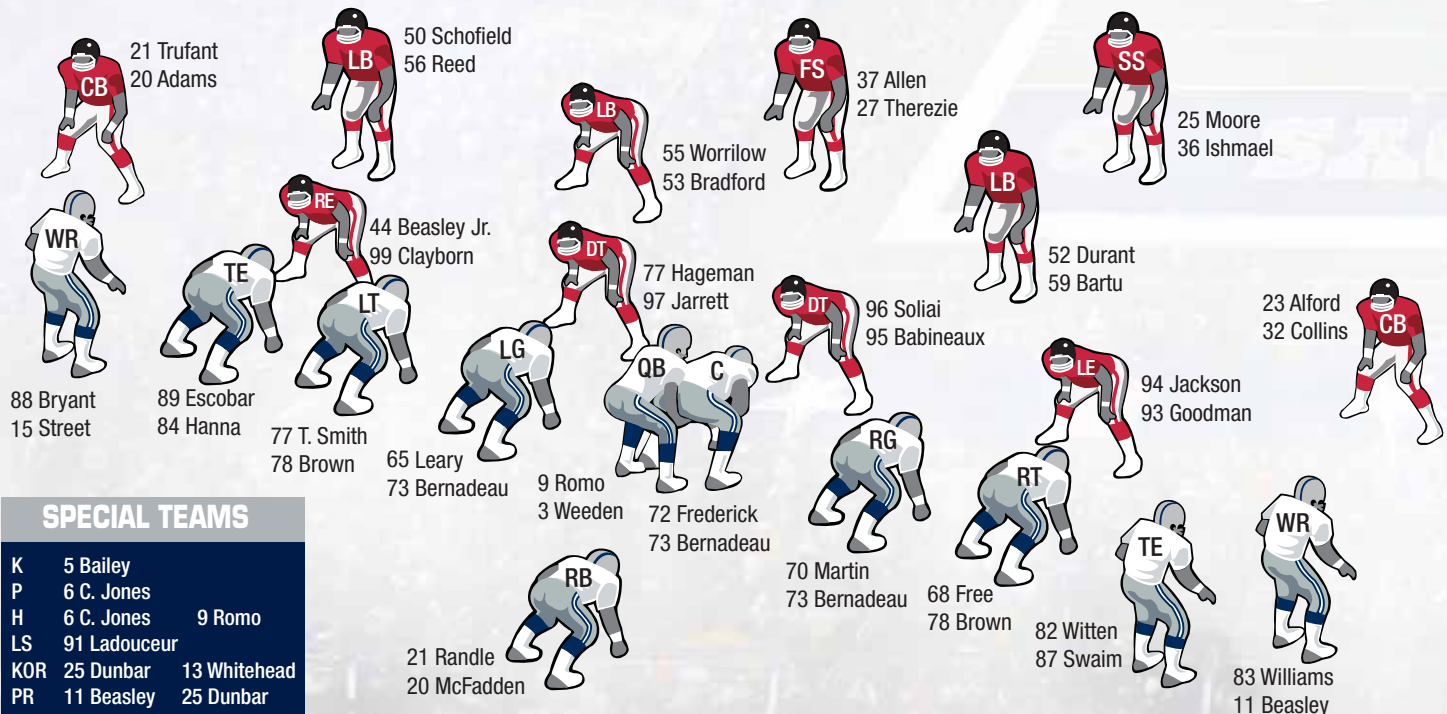
**Kyle Valero:** Assistant Wide Receivers

**Turner West:** Defensive Assistant

**Wade Wilson:** Quarterbacks

**Mike Woicik:** Strength and Conditioning Coordinator

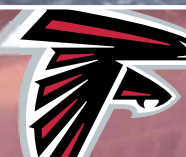
**PRACTICE SQUAD:** LB Dakorey Johnson, WR Vince Mayle, QB Kellen Moore, CB Deji Olatoye, C Ronald Patrick, QB Jameill Showers, WR Rodney Smith, LB Joe Thomas, OT Darrien Weems, OT John Wetzel



### SPECIAL TEAMS

K	5 Bailey
P	6 C. Jones
H	6 C. Jones 9 Romo
LS	91 Ladouceur
KOR	25 Dunbar 13 Whitehead
PR	11 Beasley 25 Dunbar





NO	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
2	Matt Ryan	QB	6-4	220	8	Boston College
3	Matt Bryant	K	5-9	203	14	Baylor
5	Matt Boshier	P	6-0	208	5	Miami (Fla.)
11	Julio Jones	WR	6-3	220	5	Alabama
12	Sean Renfree	QB	6-5	225	3	Duke
14	Eric Weems	WR	5-9	195	9	Bethune-Cookman
15	Nick Williams	WR	5-10	184	2	Connecticut
16	Justin Hardy	WR	5-10	192	R	East Carolina
17	Devin Hester	WR	5-11	190	10	Miami (Fla.)
20	Phillip Adams	CB	5-11	195	6	South Carolina State
21	Desmond Trufant	CB	6-0	190	3	Washington
22	Dezmen Southward	CB	6-2	210	1	Wisconsin

NO	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
23	Robert Alford	CB	5-10	186	3	Southeastern Louisiana
24	Devonta Freeman	RB	5-8	206	1	Florida State
25	William Moore	S	6-0	221	6	Missouri
26	Tevin Coleman	RB	6-1	210	R	Indiana
27	Robenson Therezie	DB	5-9	212	0	Auburn
32	Jalen Collins	CB	6-1	203	R	LSU
33	Terron Ward	RB	5-7	201	R	Oregon State
36	Kemal Ishmael	S	6-0	206	3	Central Florida
37	Ricardo Allen	S	5-9	186	1	Purdue
42	Patrick DiMarco	FB	6-1	234	4	South Carolina
44	Vic Beasley Jr.	OLB	6-3	235	R	Clemson
47	Josh Harris	LS	6-1	224	4	Auburn
50	O'Brien Schofield	OLB	6-3	260	6	Wisconsin
52	Justin Durant	LB	6-1	230	9	Hampton
53	Allen Bradford	LB	5-11	235	4	USC
54	Nate Stupar	LB	6-2	240	3	Penn State
55	Paul Worrlow	LB	6-1	232	3	Delaware
56	Brooks Reed	OLB	6-3	254	5	Arizona
59	Joplo Bartu	LB	6-2	230	3	Texas State
62	James Stone	C	6-3	291	1	Tennessee
65	Chris Chester	G	6-3	303	10	Oklahoma
66	Gino Gradkowski	C	6-3	300	4	Delaware
67	Andy Levitre	G	6-2	303	7	Oregon State
68	Mike Person	G	6-4	299	5	Montana State
70	Jake Matthews	OT	6-5	305	1	Texas A&M
71	Kroy Biermann	DE	6-3	255	8	Montana
72	Bryce Harris	OT	6-6	300	4	Fresno State
73	Ryan Schraeder	OT	6-7	300	3	Valdosta State
75	Jake Long	OT	6-7	322	8	Michigan
76	Tyler Polunbus	OT	6-8	308	7	Colorado
77	Ra'Shede Hageman	DE	6-6	318	1	Minnesota
80	Levine Toilolo	TE	6-8	265	3	Stanford
83	Jacob Tamme	TE	6-3	230	8	Kentucky
84	Roddy White	WR	6-0	211	11	Alabama-Birmingham
85	Leonard Hankerson	WR	6-2	211	5	Miami (Fla.)
93	Malliciah Goodman	DE	6-4	276	3	Clemson
94	Tyson Jackson	DE	6-4	296	7	LSU
95	Jonathan Babineaux	DT	6-2	300	11	Iowa
96	Paul Soliai	NT	6-4	345	9	Utah
97	Grady Jarrett	DT	6-0	290	R	Clemson
99	Adrian Clayborn	DE	6-3	280	5	Iowa

## FALCONS COACHING STAFF

**DAN QUINN: HEAD COACH**

**Keith Armstrong:** Special Teams Coordinator

**Keith Carter:** Assistant Offensive Line

**Bryan Cox:** Defensive Line

**Wade Harman:** Tight Ends



**Matt LaFleur:** Quarterbacks

**Mike LaFleur:** Offensive Assistant

**Doug Mallory:** Defensive Assistant/Linebackers

**Marquand Manuel:** Secondary/Senior Defensive Assistant

**Mike McDaniel:** Offensive Assistant

**Chris Morgan:** Offensive Line Coach

**Raheem Morris:** Assistant Head Coach/Defensive Passing Game Coordinator

**Terry Robiskie:** Wide Receivers

**Rich Scangarello:** Offensive Intern

**Lance Schulters:** Special Teams Intern

**Kyle Shanahan:** Offensive Coordinator

**Richard Smith:** Defensive Coordinator

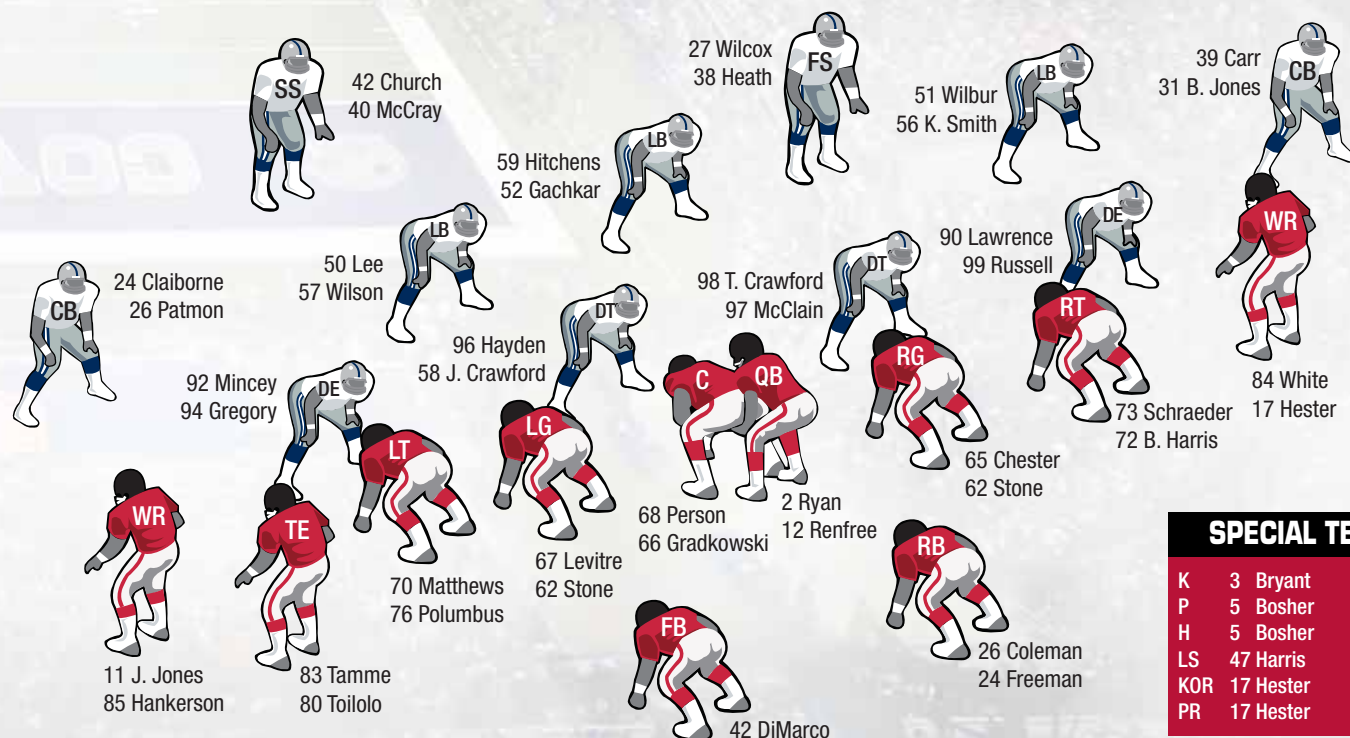
**Eric Sutulovich:** Assistant Special Teams

**Bobby Turner:** Running Backs

**Jeff Ulbrich:** Linebackers

**Chad Walker:** Defensive Assistant/Defensive Backs

**PRACTICE SQUAD:** LB Derek Akunne, WR LaRon Byrd, RB Jahwan Edwards, G Ben Garland, TE Marcel Jensen, S Akeem King, OLB Stansly Maponga, NT Joey Mbu, QB Matt Simms, LB Tyler Starr



## SPECIAL TEAMS

K	3	Bryant
P	5	Boshier
H	5	Boshier
LS	47	Harris
KOR	17	Hester
PR	17	Hester
	14	Weems
	14	Weems



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## SERIES HISTORY

The Cowboys are 16-9 against the Falcons, including 2-0 in the postseason. Atlanta won the most recent battle, 19-13, on Nov. 4, 2012 at the Georgia Dome. Dallas is 9-3 at home in the series, taking five of the last six. The Cowboys swept the first five meetings from 1966-74. The teams have split their previous six games played in the month of September.

### All-Time Results • Dallas Leads Series, 16-9

Date	Site	Winner	Score	Att.
10/2/66	Atlanta	Dallas	47-14	56,990
11/5/67	Dallas	Dallas	37-7	54,751
10/12/69	Atlanta	Dallas	24-17	54,833
10/11/70	Dallas	Dallas	13-0	53,611
9/15/74	Atlanta	Dallas	24-0	52,322
11/21/76	Atlanta	Atlanta	10-17	54,972
12/30/78*	Dallas	Dallas	27-20	60,388
1/4/81*	Atlanta	Dallas	30-27	60,022
10/27/85	Dallas	Dallas	24-10	57,941
9/21/86	Dallas	Atlanta	35-37	62,880
12/6/87	Dallas	Atlanta	10-21	40,103
9/25/88	Dallas	Dallas	26-20	39,702
9/17/89	Atlanta	Atlanta	21-27	55,285
12/30/90	Atlanta	Atlanta	7-26	50,097
12/22/91	Dallas	Dallas	31-27	60,962
12/21/92	Atlanta	Dallas	41-17	67,036
11/21/93	Atlanta	Atlanta	14-27	67,337
10/29/95	Atlanta	Dallas	28-13	70,089
10/20/96	Dallas	Dallas	32-28	64,091
9/20/99	Dallas	Dallas	24-7	63,663
11/11/01	Atlanta	Atlanta	13-20	69,101
9/7/03	Dallas	Atlanta	13-27	64,104
12/16/06	Atlanta	Dallas	38-28	71,102
10/25/09	Dallas	Dallas	37-21	81,521
11/4/12	Atlanta	Atlanta	13-19	70,840

2015 Sept. 27 at Dallas

\* NFC Divisional Playoffs



## FLASHBACK

Troy Aikman's 60-yard touchdown pass to **Kelvin Martin** with 1:42 left capped the Cowboys' hard-earned 32-28 victory against the Falcons on Oct. 20, 1996 at Texas Stadium. Emmitt Smith scored three touchdowns for Dallas, and Michael Irvin had seven catches for 119 yards. Morten Andersen booted five field goals for winless Atlanta (0-7), including a 37-yarder that gave his team a 28-25 lead with 7:51 remaining. "All he does is make plays for us," Aikman (17-of-24 for 265 yards) said of Martin.

AP Photo/Tim Sharp





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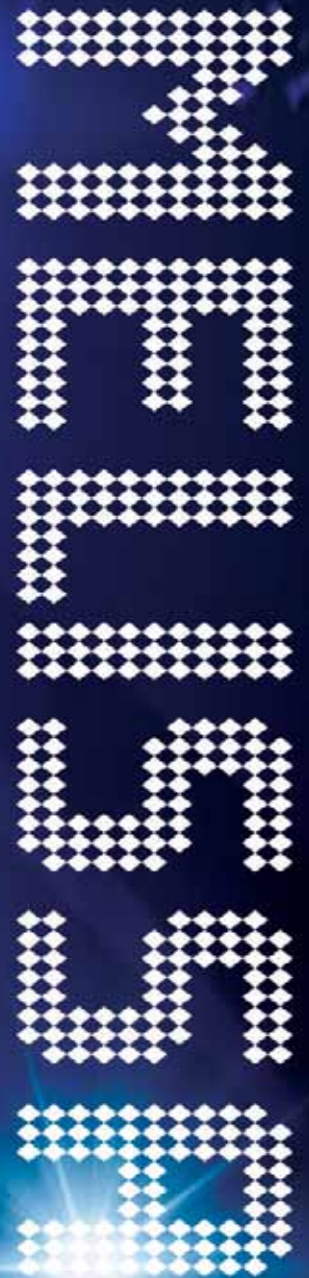
















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# DALLAS COWBOYS 2015 STATISTICS

As of Sept. 20, 2015

TEAM STATISTICS	DAL	OPP
Total First Downs	48	35
Rushing	8	8
Passing	33	21
Penalty	7	6
3rd Down: Made/Att.	10/23	8/25
3rd Down Pct.	43.5%	32.0%
4th Down: Made/Att.	0/0	1/1
4th Down Pct.	0.0	100.0%
Possession Avg.	38:50	21:10
Total Net Yards	795	515
Avg. Per Game	397.5	257.5
Total Plays	138	116
Avg. Per Play	5.8	4.4
Net Yards Rushing	189	106
Avg. Per Game	94.5	53.0
Total Rushes	56	41
Net Yards Passing	606	409
Avg. Per Game	303.0	204.5
Sacked/Yards Lost	3/18	2/8
Gross Yards	624	417
Attempts/Completions	79/61	73/43
Completion Pct.	77.2%	58.9%
Had Intercepted	2	2
Punts/Avg.	8/52.8	11/43.7
Net Punting Avg.	47.4	43.9
Penalties/Yards	21/177	13/104
Fumbles/Ball Lost	5/3	1/1
Touchdowns	5	3
Rushing	0	1
Passing	4	1
Returns	1	1

SCORE BY QUARTERS	1	2	3	4	OT	T
Cowboys	6	6	14	21	0	47
Opponents	3	10	3	20	0	36

SCORING	TDR	TDP	TDRT	2-Pt	PAT	FG	S	TP
Bailey	0	0	0	0	5/5	4/4	0	17
Witten	2	0	2	0	0/0	0/0	0	12
Wilber	1	0	0	1	0/0	0/0	0	6
Williams	1	0	1	0	0/0	0/0	0	6
Escobar	1	0	1	0	0/0	0/0	0	6
Cowboys	5	0	4	1	5/5	4/4	0	47
Opponents	3	1	1	1	3/3	5/5	0	36

2-Pt. Conversions: Cowboys 0-0, Opponents 0-0

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LG	TD
Randle	34	116	3.4	15	0
McFadden	16	47	2.9	9	0
Romo	2	11	5.5	12	0
Dunbar	1	8	8.0	8	0
Weeden	3	7	2.3	9	0
Cowboys	56	189	3.4	15	0
Opponents	41	106	2.6	27	1

RECEIVING	NO	YDS	AVG	LG	TD
Witten	15	116	7.7	15	2
Dunbar	11	115	10.5	39	0
Williams	9	144	16.0	42t	1
Beasley	8	63	7.9	16	0
Bryant	5	48	9.6	18	0
Randle	4	56	14.0	25	0
Escobar	4	24	6.0	13	1
McFadden	3	40	13.3	19	0
Street	1	18	18.0	18	0
Swaim	1	0	0.0	0	0
Cowboys	61	624	10.2	42t	4
Opponents	43	417	9.7	32	1

INTERCEPTIONS	NO	YDS	AVG	LG	TD
Wilcox	1	24	24.0	24	0
Lee	1	0	0.0	0	0
Cowboys	2	24	12.0	24	0
Opponents	2	20	10.0	19	0

PUNT RETURNS	NO	FC	YDS	AVG	LG	TD
Beasley	3	5	-2	-0.7	1	0
Cowboys	3	5	-2	-0.7	1	0
Opponents	4	2	23	5.8	15	0

KICKOFF RETURNS	NO	YDS	AVG	L	TD
Dunbar	4	101	25.3	32	0
Patmon	2	26	13.0	20	0
Cowboys	6	127	21.2	32	0
Opponents	1	21	21.0	21	0

PUNTING	NO	YDS	AVG	NET	TB	IN20	LG	BL
C. Jones	8	422	52.8	47.4	1	3	61	0
Cowboys	8	422	52.8	47.4	1	3	61	0
Opponents	11	481	43.7	43.9	0	4	63	1

FIELD GOALS	11-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+
Bailey	0/0	3/3	1/1	0/0	0/0
Cowboys	0/0	3/3	1/1	0/0	0/0
Opponents	1/1	0/0	1/1	2/2	1/1

## RESULTS AND ATTENDANCE

### Preseason Games (1-3)

L	8/13	at San Diego	7-17	57,228
L	8/23	at San Francisco	6-23	77,624
L	8/29	MINNESOTA	14-28	86,082
W	9/3	HOUSTON	21-14	85,067

### Regular-Season Games (2-0)

W	9/13	NY GIANTS	27-26	93,579
Sun.	9/20	@ Philadelphia	20-10	69,296
Sun.	9/27	ATLANTA	FOX	Noon
Sun.	10/4	@ New Orleans	NBC	7:30 p.m.
Sun.	10/11	NEW ENGLAND	CBS	3:25 p.m.
Sun.	10/18	Bye		
Sun.	10/25	@ NY Giants	FOX	3:25 p.m.*
Sun.	11/1	SEATTLE	FOX	3:25 p.m.*
Sun.	11/8	PHILADELPHIA	FOX	7:30 p.m.*
Sun.	11/15	@ Tampa Bay	FOX	Noon*
Sun.	11/22	@ Miami	FOX	Noon*
Thurs.	11/26	CAROLINA	CBS	3:30 p.m.
Mon.	12/7	@ Washington	ESPN	7:30 p.m.
Sun.	12/13	@ Green Bay	FOX	3:25 p.m.*
Sat.	12/19	NY JETS	NFLN	7:25 p.m.
Sun.	12/27	@ Buffalo	FOX	Noon*
Sun.	1/3	WASHINGTON	FOX	Noon*



## DEFENSIVE STATISTICS (Coaches' Film)

	Tackles			Sack	Int	FR
	Solo	Asst.	Total			
Lee	18	5	23	0	1	0
Church	10	7	18	0	0	0
Hitchens	11	5	16	1	0	0
Carr	7	0	7	0	0	0
Claiborne	4	3	7	0	0	0
Lawrence	3	2	5	0	0	0
Patmon	4	0	4	0	0	0
Hayden	3	1	4	0	0	1
Wilcox	3	1	4	0	1	0
McClain	2	2	4	0	0	0
Mincey	2	1	3	0	0	0
J. Crawford	0	3	3	0	0	0
Wilber	2	0	2	0	0	0
Heath	1	1	2	0	0	0
B. Jones	1	1	2	0	0	0
T. Crawford	0	2	2	1	0	0

## SPECIAL TEAMS STATISTICS (Coaches' Film)

	Tackles			FR	Bk
	Solo	Asst.	Total		
Wilber	2	1	3	0	0
Wilson	2	0	2	0	0
White	1	0	1	0	0
B. Jones	0	1	1	0	0
McCray	0	0	0	0	1







## Fighting Back

As a third-degree black belt, Maura Bivens knows how to fight. So when she was diagnosed with stage IV breast cancer, she researched her options until she discovered an aggressive new treatment. Thankfully it was a success and, three years later, she

shows no evidence of the disease. At Susan G. Komen®, we're inspired by this kind of tenacious spirit. That's why we keep investing in research that leads to medical breakthroughs, so others like Maura can keep fighting back.

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## NFC East

	W	L	T
Dallas	2	0	0
Washington	1	1	0
NY Giants	0	2	0
Philadelphia	0	2	0

## NFC North

	W	L	T
Green Bay	2	0	0
Minnesota	1	1	0
Chicago	0	2	0
Detroit	0	2	0



## NFC South

	W	L	T
Atlanta	2	0	0
Carolina	2	0	0
Tampa Bay	1	1	0
New Orleans	0	2	0

## NFC West

	W	L	T
Arizona	2	0	0
San Francisco	1	1	0
St. Louis	1	1	0
Seattle	0	2	0

## 2015 SCHEDULES

## COWBOYS 2-0

9/13	NY Giants	27-26
9/20	at Philadelphia	20-10
9/27	Atlanta	Noon
10/4	at New Orleans	7:30 pm
10/11	New England	3:25 pm
10/18	BYE	
10/25	at NY Giants	3:25 pm
11/1	Seattle	3:25 pm
11/8	Philadelphia	7:30 pm
11/15	at Tampa Bay	Noon
11/22	at Miami	Noon
11/26	Carolina (Thurs.)	3:30 pm
12/7	at Washington (Mon.)	7:30 pm
12/13	at Green Bay	3:25 pm
12/19	NY Jets (Sat.)	7:25 pm
12/27	at Buffalo	Noon
1/3/16	Washington	Noon

## GIANTS 0-2

9/13	at Dallas	26-27
9/20	Atlanta	20-24
9/24	Washington (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
10/4	at Buffalo	Noon
10/11	San Francisco	7:30 pm
10/19	at Philadelphia (Mon.)	7:30 pm
10/25	Dallas	3:25 pm
11/1	at New Orleans	Noon
11/8	at Tampa Bay	3:05 pm
11/15	New England	3:25 pm
11/22	BYE	
11/29	at Washington	Noon
12/6	NY Jets	Noon
12/14	at Miami (Mon.)	7:30 pm
12/20	Carolina	Noon
12/27	at Minnesota	Noon
1/3/16	Philadelphia	Noon

## EAGLES 0-2

9/14	at Atlanta (Mon.)	24-26
9/20	Dallas	10-20
9/27	at NY Jets	Noon
10/4	at Washington	Noon
10/11	New Orleans	Noon
10/19	NY Giants (Mon.)	7:30 pm
10/25	at Carolina	7:30 pm
11/1	BYE	
11/8	at Dallas	7:30 pm
11/15	Miami	Noon
11/22	Tampa Bay	Noon
11/26	at Detroit (Thurs.)	11:30 am
12/6	at New England	3:25 pm
12/13	Buffalo	Noon
12/20	Arizona	Noon
12/26	Washington (Sat.)	7:25 pm
1/3/16	at NY Giants	Noon

## REDSKINS 1-1

9/13	Miami	10-17
9/20	St. Louis	24-10
9/24	at NY Giants (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
10/4	Philadelphia	Noon
10/11	at Atlanta	Noon
10/18	at NY Jets	Noon
10/25	Tampa Bay	Noon
11/1	BYE	
11/8	at New England	Noon
11/15	New Orleans	Noon
11/22	at Carolina	Noon
11/29	NY Giants	Noon
12/7	Dallas (Mon.)	7:30 pm
12/13	at Chicago	Noon
12/20	Buffalo	Noon
12/26	at Philadelphia (Sat.)	7:25 pm
1/3/16	at Dallas	Noon

## BEARS 0-2

9/13	Green Bay	23-31
9/20	Arizona	23-48
9/27	at Seattle	3:25 pm
10/4	Oakland	Noon
10/11	at Kansas City	Noon
10/18	at Detroit	Noon
10/25	BYE	
11/1	Minnesota	Noon
11/9	at San Diego (Mon.)	7:30 pm
11/15	at St. Louis	Noon
11/22	Denver	Noon
11/26	at Green Bay (Thurs.)	7:30 pm
12/6	San Francisco	Noon
12/13	Washington	Noon
12/20	at Minnesota	Noon
12/27	at Tampa Bay	Noon
1/3/16	Detroit	Noon

## LIONS 0-2

9/13	at San Diego	28-33
9/20	at Minnesota	16-26
9/27	Denver	7:30 pm
10/5	at Seattle (Mon.)	7:30 pm
10/11	Arizona	3:05 pm
10/18	Chicago	Noon
10/25	Minnesota	Noon
11/1	at Kansas City (London)	8:30 am
11/8	BYE	
11/15	at Green Bay	Noon
11/22	Oakland	Noon
11/26	Philadelphia (Thurs.)	11:30 am
12/3	Green Bay (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
12/13	at St. Louis	Noon
12/21	at New Orleans (Mon.)	7:30 pm
12/27	San Francisco	Noon
1/3/16	at Chicago	Noon

## PACKERS 2-0

9/13	at Chicago	31-23
9/20	Seattle	27-17
9/28	Kansas City (Mon.)	7:30 pm
10/4	at San Francisco	3:25 pm
10/11	St. Louis	Noon
10/18	San Diego	3:25 pm
10/25	BYE	
11/1	at Denver	7:30 pm
11/8	at Carolina	Noon
11/15	Detroit	Noon
11/22	at Minnesota	Noon
11/26	Chicago (Thurs.)	7:30 pm
12/3	at Detroit (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
12/13	Dallas	3:25 pm
12/20	at Oakland	3:05 pm
12/27	at Arizona	3:25 pm
1/3/16	Minnesota	Noon

## VIKINGS 1-1

9/14	at San Francisco (Mon.)	3-20
9/20	Detroit	26-16
9/27	San Diego	Noon
10/4	at Denver	3:25 pm
10/11	BYE	
10/18	Kansas City	Noon
10/25	at Detroit	Noon
11/1	at Chicago	Noon
11/8	St. Louis	Noon
11/15	at Oakland	3:05 pm
11/22	Green Bay	Noon
11/29	at Atlanta	Noon
12/6	Seattle	Noon
12/10	at Arizona (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
12/20	Chicago	Noon
12/27	NY Giants	Noon
1/3/16	at Green Bay	Noon

## FALCONS 2-0

9/14	Philadelphia (Mon.)	26-24
9/20	at NY Giants	24-20
9/27	at Dallas	Noon
10/4	Houston	Noon
10/11	Washington	Noon
10/15	at New Orleans (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
10/25	at Tennessee	Noon
11/1	Tampa Bay	Noon
11/8	at San Francisco	3:05 pm
11/15	BYE	
11/22	Indianapolis	Noon
11/29	Minnesota	Noon
12/6	at Tampa Bay	Noon
12/13	at Carolina	Noon
12/20	at Jacksonville	Noon
12/27	Carolina	Noon
1/3/16	New Orleans	Noon

## PANTHERS 2-0

9/13	at Jacksonville	20-9
9/20	Houston	24-17
9/27	New Orleans	Noon
10/4	at Tampa Bay	Noon
10/11	BYE	
10/18	at Seattle	3:05 pm
10/25	Philadelphia	7:30 pm
11/2	Indianapolis (Mon.)	7:30 pm
11/8	Green Bay	Noon
11/15	at Tennessee	Noon
11/22	Washington	Noon
11/26	at Dallas (Thurs.)	3:30 pm
12/6	at New Orleans	Noon
12/13	Atlanta	Noon
12/20	at NY Giants	Noon
12/27	at Atlanta	Noon
1/3/16	Tampa Bay	Noon

## SAINTS 0-2

9/13	at Arizona	19-31
9/20	Tampa Bay	19-26
9/27	at Carolina	Noon
10/4	Dallas	7:30 pm
10/11	at Philadelphia	Noon
10/15	Atlanta (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
10/25	at Indianapolis	Noon
11/1	NY Giants	Noon
11/8	Tennessee	Noon
11/15	at Washington	Noon
11/22	BYE	
11/29	at Houston	Noon
12/6	Carolina	Noon
12/13	at Tampa Bay	Noon
12/21	Detroit (Mon.)	7:30 pm
12/27	Jacksonville	Noon
1/3/16	at Atlanta	Noon

## BUCCANEERS 1-1

9/13	Tennessee	14-42
9/20	at New Orleans	26-19
9/27	at Houston	Noon
10/4	Carolina	Noon
10/11	Jacksonville	Noon
10/18	BYE	
10/25	at Washington	Noon
11/1	at Atlanta	Noon
11/8	NY Giants	3:05 pm
11/15	Dallas	Noon
11/22	at Philadelphia	Noon
11/29	at Indianapolis	Noon
12/6	Atlanta	Noon
12/13	New Orleans	Noon
12/17	at St. Louis (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
12/27	Chicago	Noon
1/3/16	at Carolina	Noon

## CARDINALS 2-0

9/13	New Orleans	31-19
9/20	at Chicago	48-23
9/27	San Francisco	3:05 pm
10/4	St. Louis	3:25 pm
10/11	at Detroit	3:05 pm
10/18	at Pittsburgh	Noon
10/26	Baltimore (Mon.)	7:30 pm
11/1	at Cleveland	Noon
11/8	BYE	
11/15	at Seattle	7:30 pm
11/22	Cincinnati	3:05 pm
11/29	at San Francisco	3:05 pm
12/6	at St. Louis	Noon
12/10	Minnesota (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
12/20	at Philadelphia	Noon
12/27	Green Bay	3:25 pm
1/3/16	Seattle	3:25 pm

## 49ERS 1-1

9/14	Minnesota (Mon.)	20-3
9/20	at Pittsburgh	18-43
9/27	at Arizona	3:05 pm
10/4	Green Bay	3:25 pm
10/11	at NY Giants	7:30 pm
10/18	Baltimore	3:25 pm
10/22	Seattle (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
11/1	at St. Louis	Noon
11/8	Atlanta	3:05 pm
11/15	BYE	
11/22	at Seattle	3:25 pm
11/29	Arizona	3:05 pm
12/6	at Chicago	Noon
12/13	at Cleveland	Noon
12/20	Cincinnati	7:30 pm
12/27	at Detroit	Noon
1/3/16	St. Louis	3:25 pm

## SEAHAWKS 0-2

9/13	at St. Louis	31-34
9/20	at Green Bay	17-27
9/27	Chicago	3:25 pm
10/5	Detroit (Mon.)	7:30 pm
10/11	at Cincinnati	Noon
10/18	Carolina	3:05 pm
10/22	at San Francisco (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
11/1	at Dallas	3:25 pm
11/8	BYE	
11/15	Arizona	7:30 pm
11/22	San Francisco	3:25 pm
11/29	Pittsburgh	3:25 pm
12/6	at Minnesota	Noon
12/13	at Baltimore	7:30 pm
12/20	Cleveland	3:05 pm
12/27	St. Louis	3:25 pm
1/3/16	at Arizona	3:25 pm

## RAIERS 1-1

9/13	Seattle	34-31
9/20	at Washington	10-24
9/27	Pittsburgh	Noon
10/4	at Arizona	3:25 pm
10/11	at Green Bay	Noon
10/18	BYE	
10/25	Cleveland	Noon
11/1	San Francisco	Noon
11/8	at Minnesota	Noon
11/15	Chicago	Noon
11/22	at Baltimore	Noon
11/29	at Cincinnati	Noon
12/6	Arizona	Noon
12/13	Detroit	Noon
12/17	Tampa Bay (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
12/27	at Seattle	3:25 pm
1/3/16	at San Francisco	3:25 pm



## AFC East

	W	L	T
New England	2	0	0
Buffalo	1	1	0
Miami	1	1	0
NY Jets	1	0	0

## AFC North

	W	L	T
Cincinnati	2	0	0
Cleveland	1	1	0
Pittsburgh	1	1	0
Baltimore	0	2	0



## AFC South

	W	L	T
Jacksonville	1	1	0
Tennessee	1	1	0
Indianapolis	0	1	0
Houston	0	2	0

## AFC West

	W	L	T
Denver	2	0	0
Kansas City	1	1	0
Oakland	1	1	0
San Diego	1	1	0

## 2015 SCHEDULES

**BILLS** 1-1

9/13	Indianapolis	27-14
9/20	New England	32-40
9/27	at Miami	3:25 pm
10/4	NY Giants	Noon
10/11	at Tennessee	Noon
10/18	Cincinnati	Noon
10/25	at Jacksonville (London)	8:30 am
11/1	BYE	
11/8	Miami	Noon
11/12	at NY Jets (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
11/23	at New England (Mon.)	7:30 pm
11/29	at Kansas City	Noon
12/6	Houston	Noon
12/13	at Philadelphia	Noon
12/20	at Washington	Noon
12/27	Dallas	Noon
1/3/16	NY Jets	Noon

**DOLPHINS** 1-1

9/13	at Washington	17-10
9/20	at Jacksonville	20-23
9/27	Buffalo	3:25 pm
10/4	NY Jets (London)	8:30 am
10/11	BYE	
10/18	at Tennessee	Noon
10/25	Houston	Noon
10/29	at New England (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
11/8	at Buffalo	Noon
11/15	at Philadelphia	Noon
11/22	Dallas	Noon
11/29	at NY Jets	Noon
12/6	Baltimore	Noon
12/14	NY Giants (Mon.)	7:30 pm
12/20	at San Diego	3:25 pm
12/27	Indianapolis	Noon
1/3/16	New England	Noon

**Patriots** 2-0

9/10	Pittsburgh (Thurs.)	28-21
9/20	at Buffalo	40-32
9/27	Jacksonville	Noon
10/4	BYE	
10/11	at Dallas	3:25 pm
10/18	at Indianapolis	7:30 pm
10/25	NY Jets	Noon
10/29	Miami (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
11/8	Washington	Noon
11/15	at NY Giants	3:25 pm
11/23	Buffalo (Mon.)	7:30 pm
11/29	at Denver	7:30 pm
12/6	Philadelphia	3:25 pm
12/13	at Houston	Noon
12/20	Tennessee	Noon
12/27	at NY Jets	Noon
1/3/16	at Miami	Noon

**JETS** 1-0

9/13	Cleveland	31-10
9/21	at Indianapolis (Mon.)	7:30 pm
9/27	Philadelphia	Noon
10/4	at Miami (London)	8:30 am
10/11	BYE	
10/18	Washington	Noon
10/25	at New England	Noon
11/1	at Oakland	3:05 pm
11/8	Jacksonville	Noon
11/12	Buffalo (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
11/22	at Houston	Noon
11/29	Miami	Noon
12/6	at NY Giants	Noon
12/13	Tennessee	Noon
12/19	at Dallas (Sat.)	7:25 pm
12/27	New England	Noon
1/3/16	at Buffalo	Noon

**RAVENS** 0-2

9/13	at Denver	13-19
9/20	at Oakland	33-37
9/27	Cincinnati	Noon
10/1	at Pittsburgh (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
10/11	Cleveland	Noon
10/18	at San Francisco	3:25 pm
10/26	at Arizona (Mon.)	7:30 pm
11/1	San Diego	Noon
11/8	BYE	
11/15	Jacksonville	Noon
11/22	St. Louis	Noon
11/30	at Cleveland (Mon.)	7:30 pm
12/6	at Miami	Noon
12/13	Seattle	7:30 pm
12/20	Kansas City	Noon
12/27	Pittsburgh	7:30 pm
1/3/16	at Cincinnati	Noon

**BENGALS** 2-0

9/13	at Oakland	33-13
9/20	San Diego	24-19
9/27	at Baltimore	Noon
10/4	Kansas City	Noon
10/11	Seattle	Noon
10/18	at Buffalo	Noon
10/25	BYE	
11/1	at Pittsburgh	Noon
11/5	Cleveland (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
11/16	Houston (Mon.)	7:30 pm
11/22	at Arizona	3:05 pm
11/29	St. Louis	Noon
12/6	at Cleveland	Noon
12/13	Pittsburgh	Noon
12/20	at San Francisco	7:30 pm
12/28	at Denver (Mon.)	7:30 pm
1/3/16	Baltimore	Noon

**BROWNS** 1-1

9/13	at NY Jets	10-31
9/20	Tennessee	28-14
9/27	Oakland	Noon
10/4	at San Diego	3:05 pm
10/11	at Baltimore	Noon
10/18	Denver	Noon
10/25	at St. Louis	Noon
11/1	Arizona	Noon
11/5	at Cincinnati (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
11/15	at Pittsburgh	Noon
11/22	BYE	
11/30	Baltimore (Mon.)	7:30 pm
12/6	Cincinnati	Noon
12/13	San Francisco	Noon
12/20	at Seattle	3:05 pm
12/27	at Kansas City	Noon
1/3/16	Pittsburgh	Noon

**Steelers** 1-1

9/10	at New England (Thurs.)	21-28
9/20	San Francisco	43-18
9/27	at St. Louis	Noon
10/1	Baltimore (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
10/12	at San Diego (Mon.)	7:30 pm
10/18	Arizona	Noon
10/25	at Kansas City	Noon
11/1	Cincinnati	Noon
11/8	Oakland	Noon
11/15	Cleveland	Noon
11/22	BYE	
11/29	at Seattle	3:25 pm
12/6	Indianapolis	7:30 pm
12/13	at Cincinnati	Noon
12/20	Denver	3:25 pm
12/27	at Baltimore	7:30 pm
1/3/16	at Cleveland	Noon

**TEXANS** 0-2

9/13	Kansas City	20-27
9/20	at Carolina	17-24
9/27	Tampa Bay	Noon
10/4	at Atlanta	Noon
10/8	Indianapolis (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
10/18	at Jacksonville	Noon
10/25	at Miami	Noon
11/1	Tennessee	Noon
11/8	BYE	
11/16	at Cincinnati (Mon.)	7:30 pm
11/22	NY Jets	Noon
11/29	New Orleans	Noon
12/6	at Buffalo	Noon
12/13	New England	Noon
12/20	at Indianapolis	Noon
12/27	at Tennessee	Noon
1/3/16	Jacksonville	Noon

**COLTS** 0-1

9/13	at Buffalo	14-27
9/21	NY Jets (Mon.)	7:30 pm
9/27	at Tennessee	Noon
10/4	Jacksonville	Noon
10/8	at Houston (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
10/18	New England	7:30 pm
10/25	New Orleans	Noon
11/2	at Carolina (Mon.)	7:30 pm
11/8	Denver	3:25 pm
11/15	BYE	
11/22	at Atlanta	Noon
11/29	Tampa Bay	Noon
12/6	at Pittsburgh	7:30 pm
12/13	at Jacksonville	Noon
12/20	Houston	Noon
12/27	at Miami	Noon
1/3/16	Tennessee	Noon

**JAGUARS** 1-1

9/13	Carolina	9-20
9/20	Miami	23-20
9/27	at New England	Noon
10/4	at Indianapolis	Noon
10/11	at Tampa Bay	Noon
10/18	Houston	Noon
10/25	Buffalo (London)	8:30 am
11/1	BYE	
11/8	at NY Jets	Noon
11/15	at Baltimore	Noon
11/19	Tennessee (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
11/29	San Diego	Noon
12/6	at Tennessee	Noon
12/13	Indianapolis	Noon
12/20	Atlanta	Noon
12/27	at New Orleans	Noon
1/3/16	at Houston	Noon

**TITANS** 1-1

9/13	at Tampa Bay	42-12
9/20	at Cleveland	14-28
9/27	Indianapolis	Noon
10/4	BYE	
10/11	Buffalo	Noon
10/18	Miami	Noon
10/25	Atlanta	Noon
11/1	at Houston	Noon
11/8	at New Orleans	Noon
11/15	Carolina	Noon
11/19	at Jacksonville (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
11/29	Oakland	Noon
12/6	Jacksonville	Noon
12/13	at NY Jets	Noon
12/20	at New England	Noon
12/27	Houston	Noon
1/3/16	at Indianapolis	Noon

**BRONCOS** 2-0

9/13	Baltimore	19-13
9/17	at Kansas City (Thurs.)	31-24
9/27	at Detroit	7:30 pm
10/4	Minnesota	3:25 pm
10/11	at Oakland	3:25 pm
10/18	at Cleveland	Noon
10/25	BYE	
11/1	Green Bay	7:30 pm
11/8	at Indianapolis	3:25 pm
11/15	Kansas City	3:25 pm
11/22	at Chicago	Noon
11/29	New England	7:30 pm
12/6	at San Diego	3:05 pm
12/13	Oakland	3:05 pm
12/20	at Pittsburgh	3:25 pm
12/28	Cincinnati (Mon.)	7:30 pm
1/3/16	San Diego	3:25 pm

**CHIEFS** 1-1

9/13	at Houston	27-20
9/17	Denver (Thurs.)	24-31
9/28	at Green Bay (Mon.)	7:30 pm
10/4	at Cincinnati	Noon
10/11	Chicago	Noon
10/18	at Minnesota	Noon
10/25	Pittsburgh	Noon
11/1	Detroit (London)	8:30 am
11/8	BYE	
11/15	at Denver	3:25 pm
11/22	at San Diego	7:30 pm
11/29	Buffalo	Noon
12/6	at Oakland	3:05 pm
12/13	San Diego	Noon
12/20	at Baltimore	Noon
12/27	Cleveland	Noon
1/3/16	Oakland	Noon

**RAIDERS** 1-1

9/13	Cincinnati	13-33
9/20	Baltimore	37-33
9/27	at Cleveland	Noon
10/4	at Chicago	Noon
10/11	Denver	3:25 pm
10/18	BYE	
10/25	at San Diego	3:05 pm
11/1	NY Jets	3:05 pm
11/8	at Pittsburgh	Noon
11/15	Minnesota	3:05 pm
11/22	at Detroit	Noon
11/29	at Tennessee	Noon
12/6	Kansas City	3:05 pm
12/13	at Denver	3:05 pm
12/20	Green Bay	3:05 pm
12/24	San Diego (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
1/3/16	at Kansas City	Noon

**CHARGERS** 1-1

9/13	Detroit	33-28
9/20	at Cincinnati	19-24
9/27	at Minnesota	Noon
10/4	Cleveland	3:05 pm
10/12	Pittsburgh (Mon.)	7:30 pm
10/18	at Green Bay	3:25 pm
10/25	Oakland	3:05 pm
11/1	at Baltimore	Noon
11/9	Chicago (Mon.)	7:30 pm
11/15	BYE	
11/22	Kansas City	7:30 pm
11/29	at Jacksonville	Noon
12/6	Denver	3:05 pm
12/13	at Kansas City	Noon
12/20	Miami	3:25 pm
12/24	at Oakland (Thurs.)	7:25 pm
1/3/16	at Denver	3:25 pm



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## THIS IS REALITY

Reason No. 456 to dislike fantasy football: You had Dez Bryant on your fantasy team. Now he's out. So you go draft another player.

This is the fantasy football equivalent of what Bill Parcells liked to say when things weren't going well at a particular position. Actually Bill had two favorites. (1) You can't just go down to the Texaco (showing his age) and ring up another one. Or (2), What are we going to do? You can't just dial 1-800-receiver and have one delivered.

On your fantasy team, you just pick another one. The Cowboys need to have real players ready to go fill in for Bryant. And Randy Gregory. And Ron Leary.

The one you fantasy gamblers care about is Bryant. How will you replace those touchdowns, those yards? But for a real-life football team, if it can't replace Leary, it might not get a chance to replace Bryant's numbers.

We'll talk about Leary another day, but please know he is playing like the player the Cowboys thought he'd be when they signed him as an undrafted free agent in 2012. He had an exceptional training camp while listening to the public and pundits give his job away to rookie La'el Collins. Leary never budged. In fact, he got better. He never gave Collins a chance.

Which made his opening night groin injury and early exit from the win over the Giants more problematic. Fortunately, the Cowboys are prepared.

Prepared, by the way, doesn't mean you don't miss the player. They have a plan for replacing Bryant. It will involve changing personnel and strategy, but you play with 11. Of

course, if your focus is fantasy football, you don't care who replaces the left guard. If you're the quarterback, you do. Trust me.

If you're all about fantasy football, Mackenzy Bernadeau is not on your radar. The



Cowboys, though, are lucky to have him. Bernadeau isn't better than Leary or Travis Frederick or Zack Martin. If he was, he'd be starting ahead of them. But he's good enough to back up all three. He's good enough to be in his eighth NFL season, having started 20 games in four years with Carolina and 28 in three-plus years in Dallas before Sunday's visit to Philadelphia.

Frederick, the brainy center who has pretty much become the leader of the offensive line, trusts Bernadeau. Frederick heaps praise on Leary, but agrees Bernadeau is smart.

"He knows where he's supposed to be, knows how to pick up the adjustments and the games and the switches," Frederick says. Looked like "Mack" played pretty well against the Giants. "He played great. Graded out higher than anyone."

Fair enough, Leary, until he couldn't go any more, played 52 of the team's 71 opening-

night offensive snaps. Bernadeau played the other 19. The point is, the Cowboys offense didn't suffer.

Bernadeau is from Waltham, Mass., near Boston. He prepared for this extended NFL career by attending the noted football factory at Bentley University ("used to be Bentley College," he notes. "Moved up to Division II.") Kid him all you want about Bentley not being Notre Dame or Wisconsin or LSU, Bernadeau hasn't wasted that college degree.

"Everyone wants to start," he concedes. "I just like contributing to the team. You fill this role by being unselfish, by knowing what your goals are and by being willing to work at them."

Part of his job is helping the talented, but still overwhelmed Collins learn the same ropes. You know Collins' story: All-SEC tackle at LSU. Expected to be a first-round pick. Off-the-field circumstances not of his doing during draft week caused him to drop into the Cowboys' lap.

And part of what Collins learned quickly is that we're not in Kansas anymore, or Baton Rouge. The Cowboys saw the smoothest initial path for him inside at guard, as they did years ago with Flozell Adams. Collins has worked at both guard positions since the minicamps. He is very much still learning, and he will succeed.

"He's got the right temperament," says Bernadeau. "He doesn't get rattled. He'll be fine."

First, he learns. When Leary can't go, Bernadeau will get most of the work. When Leary can go, everyone knows his role.

Not that fantasy players care. But this isn't fantasy football the Cowboys are playing. This is reality.

*Brad Sham is in his 37th season as The Voice of the Dallas Cowboys. The award-winning broadcaster is an inaugural inductee into the Texas Radio Hall of Fame.*



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